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**STUDIES IN
AMERICAN LITERATURE**



STUDIES
IN
American Literature

A Text-Book
FOR ACADEMIES AND HIGH SCHOOLS

BY
CHARLES NOBLE
PROFESSOR OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND RHETORIC
IN IOWA COLLEGE

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.
1898

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To

PROFESSOR SELDEN L. WHITCOMB

My Colleague in the teaching of English

TO WHOSE KINDLY CRITICISM AND HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS
THIS BOOK IS DEEPLY INDEBTED



PREFACE

THE hope that this work may find a place of usefulness among our school manuals rests upon its method. Probably all teachers of Literature in college have felt the embarrassment caused by the inability of the average Freshman to appreciate form in its relation to literary expression. The aim of these studies is to assist in meeting this difficulty by furnishing a manual for use in preparatory schools which shall combine the study of form with the interpretation of Literature.

It seems reasonable that in America school work in Literature should begin with American authors; and that hand in hand with the study of their writings should go the study of form in prose and verse. Therefore selections from our best writers have been given, with analysis of their form and interpretation of their content. The selections are, of course, fragmentary; and if the use of the book leads to nothing further, it will not be very helpful. But these fragments, presented as they are, and studied according to the suggestions offered, may whet the appetite for wider reading and broader study. The criticism

is intended to be suggestive, and the lists of questions to serve as points of departure for the teacher.

Such a book, slight as it is, is not composed without help from a wide variety of sources. Special obligations are due to E. C. Stedman's "Poets of America," and to "The Library of American Literature," edited by E. C. Stedman and Ellen M. Hutchinson, to Professor Tyler's "History of American Literature," and to Professor Whitcomb's "Outlines of American Literature." For the use of copyright material thanks are due and are gladly rendered to Houghton, Mifflin & Co., The Editor of the "Boston Pilot," Small, Maynard & Co., The Lothrop Publishing Co., Charles Scribner's Sons, Lippincott's Magazine, D. Appleton & Co., and E. P. Dutton & Co. Mr. William Evarts Benjamin, publisher of "The Library of American Literature," has courteously permitted the reproduction of copyrighted portraits of Freneau and Margaret Fuller. To Mr. O. Reich of Cincinnati, Ohio, thanks are due for the portraits of Whitman and Edwards, and to Mr. H. W. Lanier of New York for the portrait of his distinguished father.

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LIST OF WORKS ON AMERICAN LITERATURE

This list has been compiled with the assistance of Mr. R. W. Coues of Harvard University. It makes no claim to completeness; but is designed to include works in English of a general character which may be useful to teachers. No biographies of individual authors or critical studies of single works are named.

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STUDIES IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

AMERICAN LITERATURE must be studied as a branch of English Literature. It is necessary for American students to make it a special object of study because it does not receive due consideration in the manuals of English Literature. But it is important that the student should guard against the mistaken notion that national independence implies literary contrast. Americans speak English with some differences from British English; but if they speak correctly, they speak English. So American authors write English Literature with some differences from British writings; but their writings, if Literature at all, are English Literature. It is of interest for us to determine whether Americans have made a distinct contribution to the great work of English writers. It may be of use for us to learn what is the relation of American writings to the great field of English Literature. In order to do this successfully and in order to

appreciate intelligently the work which our best writers have done, we need to know something of the forms which English Literature took before American Literature began to be; and these we now proceed to consider.

**Two Great
Classes
of Literature.**

All Literature of which we know anything is divided into two great classes, called prose and verse. This classification, like all classification of living things or of the products of life, is inexact. Some prose has more of the qualities of verse than has some verse; and there are writings, like some of the poems of Walt Whitman, for example, which it is difficult to put into either class; just as it is difficult for naturalists to tell whether some living things are animals or vegetables. Nevertheless, the distinction between prose and verse is a real and important distinction. The words suggest one of

Prose.

the important elements of difference. Prose comes from the Latin *prorsa*, meaning straightforward. It is the sort of writing in which one goes straight on until the sentence is complete. Verse is from

Verse.

the Latin *versus*, a turning. It is the sort of writing in which one turns and begins a new line at certain set points, according to certain rules. Accompanying features of verse are alliteration, or the regular recurrence of the same consonant sound or of similar vowel sounds at the beginning of words or syllables; rhythm, or the regular recurrence of accents in such a manner as to produce a musical effect; and rime, or the regular recurrence of the same vowel sounds at the end of words or syllables

and usually at the end of the line. Alliteration and rhythm are employed in prose, but not so freely as in verse. Rime is never considered suitable for use in prose.

Verse is so generally employed in poetry that the *Poetry*. terms are often confused. They should be carefully distinguished; for much good verse, like Dr. Holmes' famous "One Hoss Shay," has scarcely any elements of poetry, and there is prose, like "Ik Marvel's" "Dream Life," which is essentially poetic. It is not easy to define poetry. It is the kind of writing in which the imagination predominates. It employs metaphor, simile, personification, and other tropes more freely than does prose. Poetry does not argue. It reports the visions of the seer. It is essentially creative. The poet appeals to the emotions rather than to the understanding. These statements characterize rather than define, and some of them might be reasonably disputed, but they may serve to help us make the necessary distinction between prose and poetry.

The principal forms of prose and verse had been developed in English Literature before American Literature began to be. American writers imparted qualities of their own to these already established forms. But they have not—except in a few instances—attempted to change them or to depart from them.

The forms of English verse are determined by the length and grouping of the lines, the kind of feet,—that is, combinations of accented and unaccented

syllables,—and the use or disuse and arrangement of rime.

The Foot.

A foot consists of one accented syllable with one or more unaccented syllables. Names have been given to the different kinds of feet which are somewhat misleading, as they are borrowed from the Latin system of verse in which “quantity,” or length of vowel sound, is the essential point, whereas in English verse, accent or stress is the regulating principle. But these names are generally employed, and there are no accepted substitutes for them. The foot is the combination of accented and unaccented syllables. There are five, or, according to some authorities, six such combinations. An accented followed by an unaccented syllable is a Trochee or Trochaic foot, as Beauty. An accented followed by two unaccented syllables is a Dactyl, as Joyfully. An unaccented followed by an accented syllable is an Iambus, as Before. Two unaccented syllables followed by one accented make an Anapest, as Serenade. An accented syllable with unaccented before and after is an Amphibrach, as Alarming. Some prosodists add the Spondee, consisting of two accented syllables, as Amen. This may be put in tabular form, as follows, using \times as the sign of the unaccented syllable and $/$ as the sign of the accented.

Trochee	$/ \times$	Beauty	Iambus	$\times /$	Before
Dactyl	$/ \times \times$	Joyfully	Anapest	$\times \times /$	Serenade
Amphibrach	\times / \times	Alarming	Spondee	//	Amen

The Line.

The different lines, or verses,—for, technically, a verse is a line,—are formed by the combination of

these feet, and are called by names indicating the number of feet. Thus if a line has two accents it is called Dimeter; if three, Trimeter; if four, Tetrameter; if five, Pentameter; if six, Hexameter. The following examples of lines are all taken from Longfellow's poems.

Solemnly, mournfully,
Dealing its dole,
The Curfew Bell
Is beginning to toll.

Dimeter with
Dactyl,
Trochee, and
Iambus.

From the spirits on earth that adore,
From the souls that entreat and implore
In the fervor and passion of prayer.

Anapaestic
Trimeter.

Like a ring of fire around him
Blazed and flared the red horizon.

Trochaic
Tetrameter.

I lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
With forms of saints and holy men who died.

Iambic
Pentameter.

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and
the hemlocks.

Hexameter
with Dactyls
and
Trochee
or Spondee.

These feet and lines are combined with freedom, and in almost endless variety, and by their artistic use all the beautiful forms of English verse are made. Extra accents and defective feet are sometimes used for emphasis and variety.

An important matter in verse is the point where Cesura. the voice pauses for rest or emphasis. Usually there will be one principal pause within each line, and the point where this pause occurs is called the Cesura. If it occurs always at nearly the same part of the line, the effect is likely to be monotonous or sing-song. A wise arrangement of the line so that the

rhetorical pause shall assist the melody and variety of the rhythm is one of the sure indications of an artistic writer of verse.

**Stythic and
Stanzaic.**

Another important distinction of form, in English verse, is that between Stanzaic, in which the lines are grouped into stanzas of various lengths and arrangement, and continuous, or, as it is sometimes called, "Stythic," in which the lines are written continuously with no stanza divisions.

Stythic.

The Old English, or Anglo-Saxon verse is continuous, and so are most of the extended narrative, or descriptive, or epic poems, such as Whittier's "Snow-Bound," Bryant's translation of Homer, and others. Of this form some of the best-known examples are Bryant's "Thanatopsis," in unrimed iambic pentameter, or Blank Verse; Longfellow's "Hiawatha," in unrimed trochaic tetrameter; Holmes' "Poetry, a Metrical Essay," in rimed iambic pentameter; Emerson's "Problem," in rimed iambic tetrameter; and Longfellow's "Evangeline," in a hexameter line composed largely of dactyls and trochees. That these distinctions may be clear, examples of each are given.

**Unrimed
Iambic
Pentameter
or Blank
Verse.**

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language.

There breathes no being but has some pretence
To that fine instinct called poetic sense.

**Rimed
Iambic
Pentameter
or Heroic
Verse.**

**Unrimed
Trochaic
Tetrameter.**

**Rimed
Iambic
Tetrameter.**

Farewell ! said he, Minnehaha !
Farewell, O my Laughing Water !

He builded better than he knew ;
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

This is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and
the hemlocks

Bearded with moss and with garments green, indistinct
in the twilight.

Unrimed
Dactylic
Hexameter.

The most important of these continuous forms is **Blank Verse**.
that called Blank Verse. Sometimes this term is
loosely applied to any unrimed verse; but it should
be confined to that form which probably Bryant has
written with greater perfection than has any other
American poet, the unrimed iambic pentameter.

Stanzaic verse is that in which the lines are ar- **The Stanza.**
ranged in groups of varying numbers, called stanzas.
There is the greatest conceivable variety of these
groups. But the principal forms are named simply
from the number of lines in each group.

Thus, Whittier's famous poem "Maud Muller" is **Couplet**.
written in couplets, or stanzas of two lines each.

Ah, well ! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes ;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away.

Whittier is very fond of the **Triplet**, or stanza of **Triplet**.
three lines. He uses it frequently with beautiful
effect. Thus, in "Benedicite":

God's love and peace be with thee, where
Soe'er this soft autumnal air
Lifts the dark tresses of thy hair!

Whether through city casements comes
Its kiss to thee, in crowded rooms,
Or, out among the woodland blooms,

It freshens o'er thy thoughtful face,
Imparting, in its glad embrace,
Beauty to beauty, grace to grace.

Quatrain.

The stanza most frequently used is the Quatrain, or stanza of four lines. Most of the ballads and most of the familiar hymns are written in this. I take an example from Longfellow's "Psalm of Life."

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real ! Life is earnest !
And the grave is not its goal ;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Quintette.

A less common, but not very unusual form is the Quintette, or five-line stanza. A beautiful example of this is found in Whittier's "Hampton Beach."

The sunlight glitters keen and bright,
Where, miles away,
Lies stretching to my dazzled sight
A luminous belt, a misty light,
Beyond the dark pine bluffs and wastes of sandy gray.

Sestette.

The Sestette, or six-line stanza, is much more common. Many examples are found in all the poets, and I take one from Longfellow's "Sandalphon."

When I look from my window at night,
And the welkin above is all white,
All throbbing and panting with stars,
Among them majestic is standing
Sandalphon the angel, expanding
His pinions in nebulous bars.

Septette.

The Septette, or seven-line stanza, is illustrated by the following from Dr. Holmes' poem "The Chambered Nautilus":

Build thee more stately mansions, Oh my soul,
 As the swift seasons roll!
 Leave thy low vaulted past!
 Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
 Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
 Till thou at length art free,
 Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea !

Dr. Holmes was also very fond of the Octette, or Octette. eight-line stanza. Take, for an example, this from "The Star and the Water Lily":

The sun stepped down from his golden throne,
 And lay in the silent sea,
 And the Lily had folded her satin leaves,
 But a sleepy thing was she ;
 What is the Lily dreaming of?
 Why crisp the waters blue ?
 See, see, she is lifting her varnished lid !
 Her white leaves are glistening through.

A famous stanza, in nine lines, is that which was used by Spenser in the "Faerie Queene." To eight rimed iambic pentameter lines he added a line with six feet, called an Alexandrine, and this combination makes the Spenserian stanza. Bryant used it in one of his earlier poems, called "After a Tempest."

The day had been a day of wind and storm ;
 The wind was laid, the storm was overpast,
 And stooping from the zenith bright and warm
 Shone the great sun on the wide earth at last.
 I stood upon the upland slope, and cast
 Mine eye upon a broad and beauteous scene,
 Where the vast plain lay girt by mountains vast,
 And hills o'er hills lifted their heads of green,
 With pleasant vales scooped out and villages between.

These are the chief forms of stanzas used by the great poets. They may be varied greatly by the use

of lines of different lengths, and the management of rhythm, rime, and alliteration. In some extended narrative poems and in odes, the groups of lines are of irregular number and often exceed nine. In these cases it is better, perhaps, to use the term strophe, rather than stanza, although the meaning of the two words is essentially the same.

**Single
Stanza
Forms.**

The Sonnet.

There are some single stanza forms and other fixed forms of verse which should be spoken of in this connection. The Sonnet was originally borrowed from Italian poetry, but has become a beautiful and characteristic feature of English verse. It consists of fourteen iambic pentameter lines, arranged in two groups of eight and six. The eight-line group has its rimes arranged thus, *a, b, b, a*. That is, in the first and second quatrains, the first line rimes with the fourth, and the second with the third. Dr. Holmes describes the arrangement familiarly as "two rimes sandwiched between two others." This rime arrangement has been made familiar by Tennyson's use of it in the poem "In Memoriam." The six-line group may be arranged in several different ways, a scheme frequently used being this: *a, b, c, a, b, c*. It is essential to excellence in the Sonnet, as in all single stanza forms, that the thought or emotion expressed should be such as can well be condensed into this brief compass. The Sonnet also calls for a distinct advance in the thought at the point where the eight-line group ends and the six-line group begins. It should be noted that the great English poets have not always held themselves strictly to the rules of

the Italian Sonnet. For example, Shakespeare's sonnets are fourteen-line iambic pentameter poems, but do not follow the rules of riming and grouping given above. A good example of the Sonnet is "The Broken Oar," by Longfellow.

Once upon Iceland's solitary strand
A poet wandered with his book and pen,
Seeking some final word, some sweet Amen,
Wherewith to close the volume in his hand.
The billows rolled and plunged upon the sand,
The circling sea-gulls swept beyond his ken,
And from the parting cloud-rack now and then
Flashed the red sunset over sea and land.
Then by the billows at his feet was tossed
A broken oar; and carved thereon he read,
"Oft was I weary, when I toiled at thee":
And like a man, who findeth what was lost,
He wrote the words, then lifted up his head,
And flung his useless pen into the sea.¹

As the Italians gave us the Sonnet, the French have given us a number of dainty bright forms, either single stanza, or with a fixed number of stanzas. Of late years they have been favorites with verse writers for the lighter, brighter, more delicate poems, such as are sometimes called "Vers de Société." They are written under strict rules as to the number of lines and the arrangement of rimes, and are usually confined to two or at the most three rimes. They are called by various French names, such as Rondeau, Rondel, Ballade, Triolet, Villanelle, Chant Royal, etc. H. C. Bunner has

French
Forms.

¹ For the use of this poem we are indebted to the courtesy of Houghton, Mifflin & Co., publishers of Longfellow's Works.

written very beautifully in these forms; and as an example I give a Triolet by him called "Mignonette."

A pitcher of mignonette
In a tenement's highest casement;
Queer sort of a flower pot — yet
That pitcher of mignonette
Is a garden in heaven set
To the little sick child in the basement,—
The pitcher of mignonette
In the tenement's highest casement.

Rime.

Rime is the recurrence of the same vowel sound at the end of words or syllables, and usually at the end of the line. To make a good rime it is necessary: 1st, that the recurrent vowel sound should be in the accented syllable; 2d, that the preceding consonants should differ; and 3d, that the succeeding consonants should be the same. Thus "glad" and "bad" are good rimes, but "glad" and "hag" are not; neither are "bad" and "bade," though Chaucer, sometimes called the Father of English poetry, used such rimes as the last. "Sleepy" and "creepy" are good rimes, "creepy" and "defy" are not, because of the different sound of the last syllables caused by the accent. When the rimed accented syllable is the penult, the rime is called "feminine" or double; as "finding," "binding." Rimes may be triple, as "slenderly," "tenderly"; and there are instances even of quadruple rime, as "dutifully," "beautifully."

Alliteration is really rime at the beginning of words and syllables; and in the oldest English poetry it was the regular characteristic feature, whereas end

rime was occasional and ornamental. In modern English verse the relative proportion of end rime and beginning rime or alliteration is reversed, end rime being usual, regular, characteristic; while alliteration, or beginning rime, is occasional and ornamental.

Assonance is the recurrence of similar vowel sounds without reference to the accompanying consonants; as in these lines from Lowell:

The great *shorn sun* as you see it now
Across eight miles of *undulant gold*.

Sometimes, but rarely in English verse, assonance is used at the end of the line, instead of true rime. A great deal of the most delicate art in verse making is found in the use of assonance and alliteration.

Verse may be classified according to the nature of the thought it expresses, and the manner in which it treats that thought, into Epic, Lyric, and Dramatic. Epic verse is that which tells a story. This definition is too simple to be complete, but it gives the essential quality which has given its name to this type of poetry. We generally associate the ideas of seriousness of manner and heroic action with the Epic; and the great poems of this class have these qualities. But considered as the name of a class, it seems best to include under the Epic all continued narrative and descriptive poems, such as Longfellow's "Hiawatha" and "Tales of a Wayside Inn," and Lowell's "Sir Launfal." The first American poem of any pretension was in this form, — Joel Barlow's

"Columbiad." It had, however, more pretension than performance, and is not worthy to be mentioned with the great Epics of English Literature. In fact, American Literature has not yet produced a great Epic worthy to be put in the same class with the works of Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Milton. It has produced, however, some very beautiful narrative poems, such as those already mentioned.

The **Pastoral**. An important form of the Epic, though one slightly represented in American Literature, is that called the **Pastoral**. It deals with rural scenes and characters, especially, as the name indicates, with shepherds and shepherdesses. The aim of this type of poetry is simplicity. The shepherds, however, in most examples of the English pastoral, are very unlike the actual men and women who care for sheep and cattle; and such verse seems to have a strong tendency to unreality.

Lyric Verse. Lyric verse is that originally adapted to be sung to the accompaniment of the Lyre. That is the origin of the name. The term is now used to include all short poems in which the personal and emotional elements are predominant. There is an endless variety of Lyrics of love, of war, of religion, and of conviviality. The Sonnet is a Lyric form which has been described. The most elaborate and artificial form of the Lyric is the Ode; seldom designed to be sung, and yet belonging to this class. The most famous example of this form in American Literature is Lowell's "Commemoration Ode." It is difficult to find or to frame a satisfactory definition

of the Ode; but we will gratefully accept that which Mr. Edmund Gosse has published: "a strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyrical verse, directed to a fixed purpose, and dealing progressively with one dignified theme." The Ballad is the form of the *The Ballad.* Lyric which most closely resembles the Epic; it being a short narrative poem, originally intended to be sung. Indeed, the Ballad is by some writers classed with the Epic, and may well be considered an intermediate form, having the narrative quality and often the simplicity of the Epic, while it is usually rapid in movement, brief and emotional in its appeal, qualities which belong to the Lyric. Longfellow's "Wreck of the Hesperus" and Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie" are among the best-known American Ballads.

Another form, which may be considered as intermediate between the Epic and Lyric, is the Elegy. *The Elegy.* In length, it tends toward the proportions of the reflective Epic; but usually stops short of true Epic dimensions. In thought it is intensely lyrical, usually expressing serious reflections in view of sorrow or death. It is a marked characteristic of the poetry of the latter part of the eighteenth and the earlier part of the nineteenth centuries, and has one notable representative in our Literature, in Bryant's "Thanatopsis."

Dramatic verse is that in which character, events, and ideas are put before us by means of conversation and action, without narration, description, or exposition. In most of its greatest examples it is designed for representation on the stage. But the best Ameri- *Dramatic
Verse.*

can Dramatic poems have not been so represented. George H. Boker's "Francesca da Rimini" is perhaps the only example of a successful acting Dramatic poem in American Literature.¹

Prose Form. Prose Form seems a simpler matter than that of verse; but on account of that very apparent simplicity demands especial care for the creation or the appreciation of its artistic effects. To a certain extent the means by which the beautiful effects of verse are produced force themselves upon the attention; whereas, in prose, we often enjoy the result of the most laborious painstaking with no consciousness that there has been any effort put forth. All school books on rhetoric deal with the principles of prose writing more or less fully, and on this account it might seem that we need not pay much attention to that matter here. Still a brief discussion of some of the more essential principles will not be out of place.

Diction.

After the obvious and elementary questions of grammar and syntax have been settled, the first point of importance to be considered is Diction. By this we mean the author's selection and use of words. Our modern dictionaries contain upwards of two hundred thousand words. Shakespeare, however, used only about fifteen thousand; and it is safe to assume that not many authors have a much larger vocabulary. Evidently there is room for great

¹ For the fuller study of verse forms which the teacher may desire, the best available manuals with which I am acquainted are "A Handbook of Poetics," by F. B. Gummere, and "A Primer of English Verse," by Hiram Corson. "Ballades and Rondeaux," edited by Gleeson White, contains a good account of the French forms.

differences in the selection of words. An author's Diction may be prevailingly Saxon or Norman; or, to go back closer to the sources, Germanic or Latin. English is to a great extent a composite of these two elements, and the degree to which one or the other predominates in a writer will have a very important effect upon his style. There is a terse strength gained by a preference for the Saxon words, which, however, is sometimes gained at the expense of precision and elegance. Washington Irving is a good example of the author who wisely adapts his Diction to his subject, the proportion of Norman to Saxon words being far larger in an essay describing the tomb of a crusader, for example, than in the description of an English barn-yard in the same volume. Another point of importance in Diction is the proportion of short and long words; which, however, is likely to correspond closely to the proportion of Saxon and Norman. Some authors are much more literal in their style than others. Words may be used in an endless variety of figures of speech. I will not repeat the definitions of the usual Tropes and Figures which are given in the works on rhetoric; but call attention to the importance, as a point of style, of the use of words in Figurative senses. There is a recognized distinction between the words suitable for use in prose and those which may properly be employed in poetry. Some critics and some poets have protested against the acknowledgment of this distinction, and have shown that the most poetic words may sometimes be employed in prose, and the

Saxon or
Norman.

Figurative
or Literal.

Poetic.

most prosaic, even to vulgarisms and slang phrases, may be effectively used in poetry. But this only tests the rule by showing the exceptions which must be allowed. It remains clear that a frequent use of such words as "eve," "morn," "ere," that is, of abbreviated forms and archaisms, tends to weaken prose, and that a corresponding misuse on the other side tends to vulgarize poetry. Finally a writer may, in prose as well as in poetry, suit the sound to the sense. He may use the onomatopoetic words, those whose sound imitates what they denote; as "buzz," "hiss," "whisper." Or he may more subtly select words which will in a less obvious, more suggestive way correspond in sound to his idea. Alliteration is employed by some writers, as in Lowell's "The water tinkles like a distant guitar or drums like a tambourine"; but if there is much of this it approaches the border line of poetry, and so weakens the style. In general it may be said that the wise writer will carefully, and thus after a while instinctively, adapt Diction to subject; and that his effects will be gained by means which do not obtrude themselves upon the reader's notice.

Sentences.

Words are combined in sentences; and the next point in style to be considered will be sentence structure. Here there is even more room for difference, within the limits of good grammar, than in the selection of words. The sentences may be prevailingly long or short; or they may be judiciously alternated. We cannot fail to notice in Emerson, for example, a tendency to short sentences, as in

Long or Short.

the opening paragraphs of the *Essay on Wealth*; while Lowell's sentences are, on the average, longer. The choppy, disconnected effect of a long series of very short sentences and the obscurity caused by a long and involved sentence are equally obvious. But legitimate effects in style are produced by both; and the wise writer will not be limited to either. So sentences may be periodic; that is, so constructed that the meaning is held completely in suspense until the end. A strictly periodic sentence is so constructed that there is no point from beginning to end where one could put a period and have in the words before the point a grammatical sentence. But the periodic effect may be produced, where the meaning is held in suspense until very near the end, though it might be possible to cut off the last two or three words and still leave a complete grammatical sentence. So a composite sentence might be formed of two strictly periodic clauses; in which case the effect of the whole would still be periodic. On the other hand, a loose sentence is one in which the clauses are so put together that one or more of them could be cut off and a complete sentence left. That is, there is no attempt made to hold the main thought in suspense. It is made plain in the first few words; and the modifying or amplifying phrases are introduced in the form of clauses which might be easily turned into sentences. Here also there is no question of good or bad as between the two sorts of sentence. Each has its uses; and a judicious writer will not deprive himself of the right

Periodic or
Loose.

Balanced.

to employ both. Some authors are, however, pre-vailingly periodic in their style; others prevailingly loose; and important effects may depend upon this difference. Sentences again may be "Balanced"; that is, they may be so arranged that corresponding words come at corresponding points, as at the beginning or the end or the middle of clauses. I may make my sentence balanced, or may leave it quite unbalanced. And so I may have a very simple balanced sentence. Sometimes the balance is made between contrasted ideas, in which case we have Antithesis; of which some writers are very fond. Sentences may even be rhythmical; that is, there may be a perceptible recurrence of accented syllables which tends to regularity. If it becomes so regular that it can be measured into lines, the prose has crossed the border, and become verse. In sentence structure much depends on what the rhetoricians call

Mass.

"Mass." This is the placing of the most important words where they will be most likely to attract and hold the attention; usually either at the end or at the beginning. Equally important, especially

Coherence.

in long sentences, is "Coherence"; that is, such an arrangement of the words and such a use of connectives that the thought easily passes from clause to clause; and the whole sentence hangs together. In all these matters there is a wide difference between good writers. An author's style is judged no more by his words than by his sentences.

The Paragraph.

What the word is to the sentence that, say the rhet-

oricians, the sentence is to the "Paragraph." One feels, before he understands it or realizes the cause of it, the effect of good paragraph structure. The mere look of a page unbroken by paragraph divisions is discouraging to most readers; and on the other hand a page broken up into numerous very short paragraphs, unless, of course, conversation or a collection of proverbs, makes an impression of a broken, disconnected style which is to many minds even more wearisome. The principles of paragraph structure are almost identical with those that govern the sentence; the difference being mainly one of scale. The matter of Unity which was omitted from the discussion of the sentence needs careful attention in the paragraph. Some writers seem to pay very little attention to the paragraph as a unit of structure, and apparently divide mainly on considerations of mechanical convenience. But a paragraph should have as distinct a reason for its existence as a sentence. It should centre about a single main thought. It should show an orderly arrangement of thought. It may have sentences which balance each other as the words of the sentence balance. It may be constructed on the principle of suspense; when it will be essentially periodic. It may state the main thought at the beginning, and proceed by a series of modifications or amplifications; in which case it will be like the loose sentence. It may be well or badly massed. The most important ideas should be, as the most important words in the sentence, either at the beginning or the end. It may have its sen-

tences well or badly connected. And it may itself be deftly or clumsily connected with the paragraphs preceding or following. A conscious, artistic use of the paragraph is a comparatively late development in prose style. We do not find much evidence of it in the writers of the Elizabethan time; whereas modern authors of the best type take great pains to have their paragraphs well constructed.

When we come to consider the larger units of composition, we find that the style is strongly influenced by the form. That is to say, the brief essay, like those of Bacon, will call for a different style from that which characterizes an extended treatise. Authors vary greatly in the artistic use of larger divisions of composition. Sections, chapters, books, volumes, and series may be written with more or less attention to all these principles of style which we have considered. Beyond and above all this, moreover, is the nameless indefinable quality, which is sometimes called, specifically, "style." It manifests itself in all these details of form of which I have spoken; but it is more and other than they. It is the subtle aroma of the personality. The man himself looks out upon us through the words and sentences of the writer. And when that personality seizes upon our imaginations with the grip of a master, we cease our efforts at analysis; and wonder gratefully at the mystery of genius.

Prose Literature is later in its development than verse. This is not because men spoke in verse before they spoke in prose. It is probably because in the

earliest and simplest times men depended upon memory for the preservation of important compositions. Verse is much more easily remembered than prose. So the earliest prose compositions were forgotten, while the compositions in verse were remembered and repeated, chanted or sung, from one generation to another. After men began to read and write, prose compositions, speeches, and chronicles and legends began to be written, and Prose Literature began to be; all which, of course, was long before the birth of American Literature. The earliest American Prose is better than the earliest American Verse, which is one of the characteristics of American Literature, due to the fact that it is not original, but derived from the British.

The only way to classify Prose Literature is according to the subjects about which the author writes and the general method employed, which will usually be determined by the subject. Thus one great class of Prose writings is "Narration," that which deals with events, "which recounts in order the particulars which make up a transaction," according to Professor Genung's definition. This needs to be further divided into History, Biography, and Fiction. American Literature has taken very high rank in Historical writing, Bancroft, Prescott, Motley, and Parkman being among the most distinguished authors in this division of Literature.

Biography differs from History in that it makes the life of one person central, and groups all the events around it.

Fiction. Fiction narrates imaginary events as if they were actual, not of course for the sake of deception, but for the sake of interest, sometimes with the further purpose of illustrating a period of History or enforcing a moral lesson. Fiction again may be divided into the "Romance," which deals with the extraordinary and improbable in events and character; and the "Novel," which seeks to represent life and character as they really are in ordinary times and among ordinary people.

Drama. The Drama was spoken of as a form of verse. It is quite as often a form of Prose Fiction. Modern acting plays are usually written in prose. Some of the greatest Dramatic compositions combine both methods, changing between verse and prose according to the nature of the action and the subject of the conversation.

Exposition. The second great division of Prose Composition is called Exposition. It includes "Essays," whether they discuss moral, political, social, or scientific questions, as well as extended treatises on such topics. The great and important group of critical writings which discuss the nature, elements, and characteristics of literary productions comes under this general division. Also under this class would be grouped such books as discuss theological or religious questions. American Literature has some great names in this division, such as Edwards, Franklin, and the authors of the "Federalist" in the earlier period, and Emerson and Lowell in later times.

The third great division of Prose Composition is Oratory. All writings whose object is to convince or persuade come under this head. It takes three chief forms: Forensic, — the arguments or appeals of lawyers, addresses to judges or to juries, such as those of Rufus Choate; Political, — addresses or written arguments before legislative bodies or popular audiences on subjects connected with national or state politics, of which class some of the most famous examples in our Literature are the speeches of Daniel Webster and Abraham Lincoln; and Religious or Pulpit Oratory, — sermons or addresses on religious subjects, examples of which are the sermons of W. E. Channing, Horace Bushnell, and Phillips Brooks.

It will be noticed that there are forms of Prose Composition which, if the lines are strictly drawn, can hardly be included under any of these divisions. Still the classification will serve to guide us in our study of the great authors, and will be especially useful as indicating the qualities we ought to look for in each sort of composition. Thus it is evident that Narrative composition should be clear and simple in its style; that in it figures of speech should be sparingly used; that the language should be of an imaginative or impassioned character only in descriptive or oratorical passages. Even more important is it in Exposition that the language should be perfectly clear, although here for the sake of clearness illustrations and those figures of speech which help to make the thought plain will be largely employed. Oratory will give opportunity for every type of language. Force

will here be the chief consideration, and the language may sometimes be as imaginative and impassioned as that of verse. The style of Henry Ward Beecher, for example, is remarkable for the number, aptness, and beauty of the figures of speech he uses.

Recent writers on the subject of English Composition name, in addition to these forms, "Description" and "Argumentation." While I recognize the usefulness of this further classification for purposes of rhetoric, it seems best not to employ it here, inasmuch as in Literature, Description is almost always found in connection with Narration or Exposition, and Argumentation in connection with Exposition or Oratory.¹

Summary.

Thus we have noticed that American Literature has taken the forms already worked out in English Literature. It falls into two great classes: Verse and Prose. Verse again falls into two great divisions,—Styric, in which the lines are continuous; and Stanzaic, in which they are divided into groups. The principal forms of styric verse are: The unrimed iambic pentameter, or Blank Verse; the rimed iambic pentameter, or Heroic Verse; and the rimed iambic tetrameter. A foot consists of one accented and one or more unaccented syllables. The principal feet are the Iambus, the Anapest, the Dactyl, the Trochee. The lines take their names

¹ In this study of Prose Form I am under obligations especially to Genung's "Practical Rhetoric," A. S. Hill's "Principles of Rhetoric," and Wendell's "English Composition."

from the number of feet, as Dimeter, Trimeter, Tetrameter, Pentameter, etc. The stanzas are groups of lines, and are named from the number of lines, as Couplet, Triplet, Quatrain, etc. Verse is divided according to subject and style into Epic, Lyric, and Dramatic. Prose is divided according to subject and method of treatment into Narration, Exposition, and Oratory; and the first of these, Narration, has three important subdivisions: History, Biography, and Fiction.

In all the types of prose and forms of verse American authors have written with distinguished success. In the succeeding chapters we shall proceed to study the history and character of these writings, noting how the different forms have been developed in connection with the history of our national life, and trying to search out some of the peculiar excellences and striking characteristics of our greatest authors. It is a side of our history more important than the record of our wars, and more instructive than the proceedings of Congress and Legislatures. There is much in it to make us glad that we are Americans. Simplicity and purity of thought and language, fervent patriotism, hopefulness for the future of mankind, and a broad and at the same time profound faith in spiritual things are characteristics which we shall find very prominent in the great writers of our Literature.

QUESTIONS

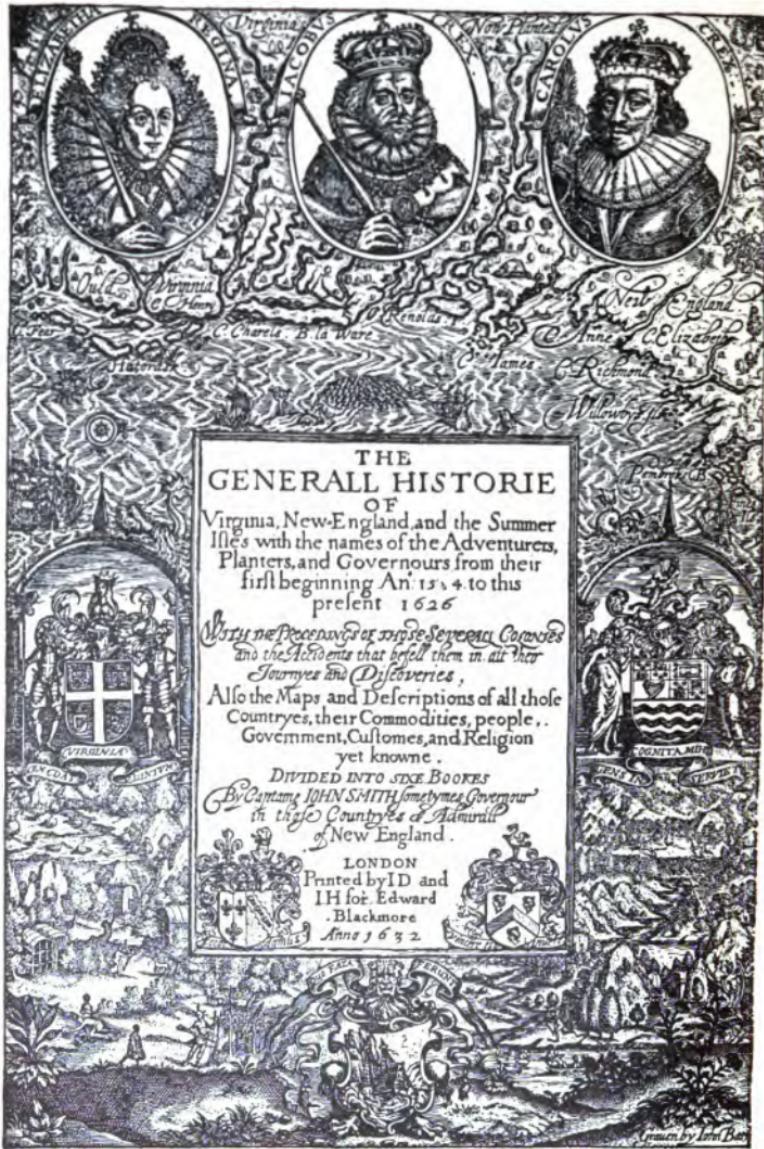
What are the distinctions between Prose and Verse? What is Poetry? Define the feet of English Verse. What are the principal lines? What are the chief forms of continuous or Stychic Verse? What is a Stanza, and what are the best-known forms? Describe the Spenserian stanza. Explain the form of the Sonnet. What are the chief French forms? What are the essential characteristics of a good rime? What is Alliteration? What is Assonance? What is Epic Verse? What is Lyric Verse? What is Dramatic Verse? What is the Pastoral? What are some of the chief forms of Lyric Verse? What is the Ode? What is Elegiac Verse? Why is Prose Form more difficult of appreciation than Verse? What is Diction? What are some of the most important points in which the Diction of good writers may differ? What is meant by poetic Diction as distinguished from prosaic? What is the effect upon style of short and long sentences respectively? What is the distinction between a periodic and a loose style? What is a balanced sentence? What is understood by Mass and Coherence as applied to the sentence? How do the principles of sentence structure apply to the Paragraph? What are some of the larger units of composition? What is the most important element of Style? Why is Prose later in development than Verse? What is Narration, and what are its three chief divisions? What is Exposition? What are the chief forms of Oratory?

PART ONE
ORIGIN AND EARLY DEVELOP-
MENT

1607-1800







CHAPTER I

PERIOD OF PREPARATION. 1607-1765

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES says somewhere that a true biography must begin one hundred years before the subject's birth. So, to get a true idea of American Literature, we must begin before the beginning. We have to take for granted the ancestry of our Literature in that of Great Britain, and begin at the point when there began to be an American people; when the English settlers first came to this continent. The settlement of European countries is hidden in the mists of antiquity. But our country was settled in a time of enlightenment and of great intellectual activity. The early settlers of England, of Saxon race, were savage pirates, ignorant and wild; and no contemporary records of their life remain. The early settlers of America were cultivated and highly civilized. So there are abundant records of their life. On the other hand, in the dim antiquity of early English History we find some great literary monuments, as the Epic poem, "Beowulf," and the writings of Cædmon and Cynewulf. There is nothing like these in American History; and the reason is that the life of the time was not indigenous, but transplanted. A real American Literature was then impossible because the people were not yet Americans, but English who had changed their home for

a special purpose. Their task was a very different one from that of the old Saxons. They had to turn a savage wilderness into a civilized country, to make roads, build bridges, cultivate farms, build houses, churches, schools, colleges, and organize all their social and political life. All that had been developed in a thousand years in Old England was created in fifty years in New England. Thus we can readily understand that the life was so busy, so hurried, so unnatural, that a native Literature like that of the early ages of older countries was impossible. But in the records of the voyages and first settlements, the journals of the colonists, the sermons of the preachers, we find the germs of the historical and devotional writings of later times; and there were some efforts at verse writing which make an interesting link between the English poetry of the seventeenth century and the work of American poets in later days.

Virginia,
1607.

John Smith,
1579-1632.

The earliest successful settlement in America was that in Virginia in 1607; and it is in connection with that settlement that we find the first memorable writing. One of the leaders of this first settlement, one of the most romantic characters in history, had the very unromantic, though highly respectable, name of John Smith. He was born in Wilmoughby, Lincolnshire, England, in January, 1579; ran away to the wars in the Netherlands when fifteen years old; was afterwards engaged in wars against the Turks; was concerned in the founding of the colony at Jamestown in 1607; in 1614 explored the New England coast from Penobscot to Cape Cod;

made several efforts to organize companies to colonize New England; spent his last years in writing descriptions of his adventures; and died in London in 1632.

There are two of his works which are of special interest and importance for us; one of these being probably the first bit of writing done in America which was ever printed. It is a letter written by Smith from Virginia, and printed in London, 1608. The title-page of this pioneer American book is as follows:

First
American
Book.

*A True Relation of such Occurrences and Accidents
of Noate*

*as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting
of that colony, which is now resident in the south part
thereof till the last return from thence.*

"A True
Relation,"
1608.

*Written by Captain Smith coronell of the said Colony
to a worshipful friend of his in England.*

[Picture of a ship in full sail.]

*Printed for John Tappe and to be sold at the Grey
Hound in Paul's Church Yard by W. W.*

The other work by Smith of special interest to us is "The General History of Virginia," printed in London, 1624. This is not an American book in the same sense as "A True Relation," because it was written as well as printed in England. It is Smith's extended elaborate account of the events and scenes briefly mentioned in the former book. Historians have been inclined to discredit some of the statements in this book, particularly the Pocahontas story, thinking that if it were actual fact it would have been related in the earlier work. We are not

"General
History of
Virginia,"
1624.

specially concerned with the question of the historic credibility of the story. But from any point of view it is of great interest, and I give it in Smith's words.

The
Original
Pocahontas
Story.

Opitchapam the King's brother invited him to his house, where, with as many platters of bread, foule, and wild beasts, as did environ him, he bid him welcome ; but not any of them would eate a bit with him, but put up all the remainder in Baskets. At his return to Opechancanough's all the King's women, and their children, flocked about him for their parts, as a due by Custome, to be merry with such fragments.

But his waking mind in hydeous dreams did oft see wondrous shapes
Of bodies strange, and huge in growth, and of stupendious makes.

At last they brought him to Werowocomoco, where was Powhatan, their Emperor. Here more than two hundred of those grim Courtiers stood wondering at him, as he had beene a monster; till Powhatan and his train had put themselves in their greatest braveries. Before a fire upon a seat like a bedsted, he sat covered with a great robe, made of Rarowcun skinnes and all the tayles hanging by. On either hand did sit a young wench of 16 or 18 years, and along on each side the house, two rowes of men, and behind them as many women, with all their heads and shoulders painted red ; many of their heads bedecked with the white downe of Birds ; but every one of them with something : and a great chain of white beads about their necks. At his entrance before the King, all the people gave a great shout. The Queene of Appamatuck was appointed to bring him water to wash his hands, and another brought him a bunch of feathers, instead of a towel to dry them. Having feasted him after their best barbarous manner they could, a long consultation was held, but the conclusion was, two great stones were brought before Powhatan : then as many as

could laid hands on him, dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, Pocahontas the King's dearest daughter, when no intreayt could prevaile, got his head in her armes and laid her owne upon his to save him from death: whereat the Emperour was contented he should live to make him hatchets, and her bells, beads, and copper; for they thought him as well of all occupations as themselves. For the King himselfe will make his owne robes, shooes, bowes, arrowes, pots; plant, hunt, or doe anything so well as the rest.

They say he bore a pleasant shew,
But sure his heart was sad.
For who can pleasant be, and rest,
That lives in feare and dread:
And having life suspected, doth
It still suspected lead.

It will be seen that Smith had considerable power of description. One gets a vivid picture of the Indian chief and his surroundings, and the story of the escape is told with spirit.

In 1609 the ship "Sea Venture" left England with a company of colonists under the leadership of Sir Thomas Gates. The party were wrecked in a hurricane off the Bermuda Islands. Some of them, however, reached Virginia, and among them was one William Strachey. Strachey wrote a description of the voyage, "A True Reportory of the Wracke and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates upon and from the Bermudas," which was published as part of a work called "Purchas's Pilgrims." As it was just about this time that Shakespeare wrote "The Tempest," the storm scene of which is, by the phrase "still vexed Bermoothes," associated with the Bermudas, scholars

William
Strachey.

have thought that Strachey's book may have been in the great dramatist's mind when he wrote the play. The following sentences from Strachey are of interest:

During all this time the heavens looked so black upon us, that it was not possible the elevation of the Pole might be observed ; not a star by night nor sunbeam by day was to be seen. Only upon the Thursday night, Sir George Summers being upon the watch, had an apparition of a little round light, like a faint star, trembling and streaming along with a sparkling blaze, half the height upon the mainmast, and shooting sometimes from shroud to shroud, tempting to settle as it were upon any of the four shrouds, and for three or four hours together, or rather more, half the night it kept with us, running sometimes along the main yard to the very end, and then returning. At which Sir George Summers called divers about him and showed them the same, who observed it with much wonder and carefulness. But upon a sudden, towards the morning watch, they lost the sight of it and knew not what way it made.

Compare this with "The Tempest," Act I, Scene II :

Ariel. I boarded the king's ship ; now on the beak,
Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,
I flam'd amazement :
Sometimes, I'd divide,
And burn in many places ; on the topmast,
The yards, and bowsprit, would I flame distinctly,
Then meet, and join.

It seems quite probable that Strachey's prose may have suggested Shakespeare's poetry, in this passage.

George Sandys, called by Dryden "best versifier of the former age," came to Virginia in 1621, and while there translated the last ten books of Ovid's "Metamorphoses."

Among these Virginia colonists was one who had the spirit we are more accustomed to associate with the Pilgrim Fathers. Alexander Whittaker, a clergyman of the Church of England, came to Virginia as a missionary in 1611, and in 1613 published in London a book called "Good News from Virginia." A sentence from this book shows the spirit of the man.

Alexander
Whittaker.

Wherefore you—right wise and noble adventurers of Virginia—whose hearts God hath stirred up to build Him a temple, to make Him an house, to conquer a kingdom for Him here, be not discouraged with those many lamentable assaults that the devil hath made against us; he now rageth most because he knoweth his kingdom is to have a short end. Go forward boldly and remember that you fight under the banner of Jesus Christ, that you plant His kingdom who hath already broken the serpent's head. God may defer His temporal reward for a season, but be assured that in the end you shall find riches and honor in this world and blessed immortality in the world to come.

On December 22, 1620, thirteen years after the settlement at Jamestown, the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth; and in the fifty years following, by the growth of that colony and by Puritan settlements at Boston, Salem, and other points, the eastern part of what is now the state of Massachusetts became a prosperous community. The Plymouth colonists were separatists of a sect called Brownists, who had fled to Holland in order to worship according to their convictions, and from Holland came to America. The other New England colonists, the Puritans, had not formally separated from the Church of England,

Plymouth,
1620.

but had abandoned the use of the Book of Common Prayer, and in their beliefs and usages closely resembled the Pilgrims. By the Act of Uniformity those who sympathized with them in England were compelled either to resume the usages they had abandoned or give up their positions in the Church. Many of them joined the colonists. They were all Calvinists in religious belief and sympathized with Cromwell in politics. And out of these conditions the peculiarities of their life and writings grew.

One of the leaders of the Plymouth colony was William Bradford. His life was very different from that of John Smith, but in its own way equally interesting. Born in Yorkshire, England, 1588, he joined the Brownists in 1606, with them fled to Holland and with them came to New England. In all the early history of the colony he was a leading spirit, and was chosen governor every year until he died in 1657. He left several bits of historical writing; but the most important is the "History of Plymouth Plantation," which was preserved in his manuscript in Boston till the Revolution, when it disappeared. In 1855 it was discovered in the Fulham Library in England; and the following year a copy was made and published by the Massachusetts Historical Society. This precious manuscript was recently, through the good offices of Ambassador Thomas F. Bayard, and the generosity of the English authorities, given into the keeping of the state of Massachusetts. Bradford has been called the Father of American History. It will be interesting to compare an extract

William
Bradford,
1588-1657.

from his book with that from John Smith, to see if the character of the men is at all reflected in their style. I select the passage describing the embarkation of the Pilgrims.

And the time being come that they must depart, they were accompanied with most of their brethren out of ye city into a towne sundrie miles off, called Delfe's Haven ; where the ship lay ready to receive them. So they left ye goodly and pleasante city, which had been their resting place near twelve years ; but they knew they were pilgrims and looked not much on these things, but lift up their eyes to the heavens, their dearest countrie, and quieted their spirits. When they came to the place they found the ship and all things ready ; and such of their friends as could not come with them followed after them, and sundrie also came from Amsterdam to see them shipte and to take their leave of them. That night was spent with little sleepe by the most, but with friendly entertainment and Christian discourse and other real expressions of true Christian love. The next day the wind being faire, they went aboarde, and their friends with them, when truly doleful was the sight of that sad and mournful parting ; to see what sighs and sobbs and prayers did sound amongst them, what tears did gush from every eye, and pithy speeches pierced each heart — that sundry of the Dutch strangers that stood on the key as spectators could not refrain from tears — yet comfortable and sweet it was to see such lively and true expressions of clear and unfained love. But the tyde — which waits for no man — calling them away that were thus loathe to depart, their Reverend Pastor, falling downe on his knees, — and they all with him — with waterie cheeks commended them with most fervent prayers to the Lord and His blessing. And then with mutual imbrases and many tears, they took their leaves of one another, which proved to be the last leave to many of them.

Edward Winslow.

Closely associated with Bradford and equally prominent in the early history of Plymouth was Edward Winslow. In connection with Bradford he kept a journal of the first days of the colony, which is an important source of history. It was long known as "Mourt's Relation"; but is now printed under its proper title of "Bradford and Winslow's Journal."

Thomas Morton.

In vivid contrast to these staid leaders of the Pilgrim colony was Thomas Morton, a rollicking English adventurer who founded a colony at Mount Wollaston — now Braintree — called it Maremount, or Merry-mount, invited the Indians to help him celebrate May-day, and furnished them with strong drink and firearms. These proceedings of course scandalized the Pilgrims, and the last performance, that of giving the Indians firearms, seriously and justly alarmed them. An expedition, under command of Miles Standish, was sent against Morton; his colony was broken up, and he himself sent back to England. He was a friend of Butler, the author of "Hudibras," and his account of an execution in Plymouth is the origin of a passage in that poem; Part 2, Canto 2, Lines 409–436. Morton published at Amsterdam, in 1637, "The New English Canaan." It is a queer farrago, opening and closing with some verses of which the following are a fair specimen :

See what multitudes of fish
She presents to fit thy dish.
If rich furres thou dost adore
And of beiver fleeces store,
See the lake where they abound
And what pleasures els are found.

"The New
English
Canaan,"
1637.

Morton speculates as to the origin of the Indians, deriving them from the Trojans; and with a lively imagination describes their customs. Among other things he asserts that Indian children are born white, and then stained brown with walnut juice. The last part of the book is a sarcastic description of the expedition against him. Standish he calls Captain Shrimp; and other names he applies to the Pilgrims are: Mr. Innucose Faircloth, Mr. Charter Party, Master Subtlety, and Captain Littleworth; which remind us strongly of the style of Bunyan, utterly contrasted as the spirit of Morton's book is to the spirit of the "Pilgrim's Progress."

Another important historical work was the journal of John Winthrop, the first governor of Massachusetts. It was published in 1825, under the title "The History of New England from 1630 to 1649."

John
Winthrop's
Journal.

Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, was probably the first white man to clearly teach the folly and wrong of persecution for conscience' sake. The book which fully brings out this great thought is entitled "The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience." It is written for the most part in the form of a dialogue between Peace and Truth. The following sentence gives the gist of the argument:

Roger
Williams,
1599-1683.

"The Bloody
Tenent,"
1644.

Sir I must be Humbly bold to say that tis impossible for any man or men to maintain their Christ by the sword and worship a true Christ; to fight against all consciences opposite to theirs and not to fight against God in some of them, and to hunt after the precious life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John Eliot,
1604-1690.

Eliot's Bible,
1661-1663.

John Eliot, called the "Apostle to the Indians," devoted his life to endeavors to bring the natives of New England to the belief and practice of Christianity. As a part of his work he translated the Bible into the Algonquin language; and this Indian Bible has become one of the most precious of the "rare" books sought after by collectors. The New Testament was printed at Cambridge in 1661, and the Old Testament in 1663.

Eliot's missionary labors resulted in the conversion of a large number; and a town of "Praying Indians" was established at Natick, Massachusetts. The fact that these tribes have disappeared, and there remains no visible evidence of Eliot's work, does not really detract from its value. Neither does the fact that no one remains alive who can read his Bible prove that the labor spent upon it was wasted. Eliot was also connected with the preparation of "The Bay Psalm Book," the first book printed in this country. He published the "Christian Commonwealth," "The Communion of the Churches," and "The Harmony of the Gospels," besides assisting in the preparation of a number of tracts in regard to the conversion of the Indians.

Nathaniel
Ward, 1578-
1652.

Nathaniel Ward was deemed worthy of mention in Fuller's "Worthies of England." He was a man of extraordinary talents and wide scholarship. Being obliged to abandon his living in England on account of nonconformity, he came to Massachusetts and for a little while preached at Ipswich, or Agawam, as it was then called. He published a book called

"The Simple Cobbler of Agawam." Its style is sententious and epigrammatic. If it were a little less artificial and strained, it would be very strong; and as it is he says a good many things in a very biting fashion. Here are a sentence or two from this book:

"The Simple
Cobbler of
Agawam,"
1647.

It is a more common than convenient saying, that nine tailors make a man: it were well if nineteen could make a woman to her mind.

It is a most unworthy thing for men that have bones in them, to spend their lives in making fiddle cases for futile women's fancies; which are the very pettitoes of infirmity, the giblets of perquisquilian toys.

Sometimes Ward dropped into poetry, as, for example:

Poetry's a gift wherin but few excel,
He doth very ill, that doth not passing well.
But he doth passing well, that doth his best,
And he doth best, that passeth all the rest.

In Ward's congregation at Ipswich for a time worshipped Mrs. Anne Bradstreet. She was a daughter of Governor Thomas Dudley. The literary spirit was strong in her; and she doubtless transmitted the tendency to her descendants, as among them are William E. Channing, R. H. Dana, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and Wendell Phillips. She was a busy wife and mother, but she took time from her many cares to put her thoughts as to life and nature into verse. In some of these verses a true sympathy with nature and a certain delicacy of expression are revealed, and they all show a refined spirit and a sensitive instinct for poetic form. Her pastor, Ward, makes some

Anne
Bradstreet,
1612-1672.

amends for his cynical words about women in some commendatory verses he wrote on occasion of the publication of Mrs. Bradstreet's poems. He represents Apollo as saying :

It half revives my chill frost-bitten blood,
To see a woman once do aught that's good ;
And chode by Chaucer's boots and Homer's furs,
Let men look to 't, lest women wear the spurs.

Poems, 1650. Her volume of poems was published first in London in 1650. The second edition was issued in Boston, printed by John Foster, 1678. This is a very precious little book, as the first volume of original American verse and one of the first literary publications in our history. The gentle modesty of her thought about herself appears in these lines :

My muse unto a child I may compare
Who sees the riches of some famous fair,
He feeds his eyes but understanding lacks
To comprehend the worth of all those knacks ;
The glittering plate and jewels he admires,
The hats and fans, the plumes and ladies' tires,
And thousand times his mazed mind doth wish
Some part at least of that brave wealth were his.
But feeling empty wishes naught obtain
At night turns to his mother's cot again,
And tells her tales — his full heart over glad —
Of all the glorious sight his eyes have had ;
But finds too soon his want of eloquence ;
The silly prattler speaks no word of sense,
But seeing utterance fail his great desires
Sits down in silence ; deeply he admires.

But that she could tell in sweet and musical language some of the things she saw in the "famous fair" is evident from the lines that follow :

CONTEMPLATION

While musing thus with contemplations fed,
 And thousand fancies buzzing in my brain,
 The sweet-tongued Philomel flew o'er my head
 And chanted forth a most melodious strain,
 Which rapt me so with wonder and delight,
 I judged my hearing better than my sight,
 And wished me wings with her awhile to take my flight.

O merry bird, said I, that fears no snares,
 That neither toyles nor hoardes up in the barn,
 Feels no sad thoughts nor cruciating cares
 To gain more good or shun what might thee harm ;
 Thy cloathes ne'er wear, thy meat is everywhere,
 Thy bed a bough, thy drink the water clear,
 Reminds not what is past nor what's to come dost fear.

Thy dawning morn with songs thou dost prevent,
 Sets hundred notes unto thy feathered crew ;
 So each one tunes his pretty instrument,
 And warbling out the old begins anew,
 And thus they pass their youth in summer season,
 Then follow thee into a better region,
 Where winter's never felt by that sweet airy legion.

An event of this period, of the greatest importance for American Literature, was the founding of Harvard College. On October 28, 1636, the colonists resolved "to give 400 Pounds towards a schoole or College." In 1638 Rev. John Harvard bequeathed 700 pounds and his library to the proposed college, and it was established at Cambridge and his name given to it. One of the first results of this action was the establishment of a printing press at Cambridge, the first on this continent; and here in the year 1640 was published the first book ever printed in America. This was "The Bay Psalm Book," a very

Harvard
College
founded,
1636.

Printing
Press.

Bay Psalm
Book, 1640.

First News-
paper, 1690.

unpoetical version of the Psalms, designed for use in the churches. Next in importance to the birth of the college in America is that of the newspaper. The first publication of the sort, called "Public Occurrences," appeared in Boston in the year 1690; but it was immediately suppressed. April 4, 1704, "The Boston News Letter" appeared, and for fifteen years this was the only newspaper in America. December 22, 1719, "The American Weekly Mercury" appeared in Philadelphia. A full account of these and other early journals is given in Professor Tyler's "History of American Literature," to which we are indebted for the facts in newspaper history given above.

Among the historical writings of the later colonial period should be mentioned the "History of Virginia," by Robert Beverly, London, 1705; a little book called "Present State of Virginia and the College," 1727, by James Blair, founder of William and Mary College; "History of North Carolina," by John Lawson; and "Review of the Military Operations in North America, 1753-1756," by William Livingston. This William Livingston was a man of a different type from many whom we have been studying. He lived in princely style at Elizabethtown, New Jersey; was a leader of thought and action during the French and Indian and Revolutionary wars; published a poem called "Philosophic Solitude or the Choice of a Rural Life"; and for a year conducted the "Independent Reflector," a weekly political and miscellaneous journal published in New York.

Robert
Beverly.

James Blair.

John
Lawson.

William
Livingston.

In the later years of this period and the earlier years of the next, John Bartram was living in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, planting and caring for his botanical garden, studying the plant life around him, and corresponding with Peter Collinson of London in regard to his botanical observations. His "Conversion to Botany," as it was told by himself, is preserved in the writings of Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, whose "Letters of an American Farmer" are perhaps the earliest expression, in the writings of an American, of the literary feeling for nature. Bartram has left the written record or journal of extensive travels in the interest of scientific observation of nature; and his son William has left writings of the same general character.

Probably the most readable book of all this period is one which its author never intended to publish. It is a diary kept in Boston and vicinity during the years 1673-1729, by Judge Samuel Sewall. It has been published in the transactions of the Massachusetts Historical Society, but has never been issued in a form suited to the general reader. Samuel Sewall was one of the leading citizens of Boston through the latter part of the seventeenth and the first part of the eighteenth centuries. As a judge he presided at some of the trials for witchcraft, and in accordance with his understanding of the evidence, condemned some poor wretches to death. In later years he became convinced that the whole thing was a delusion, and relieved his troubled conscience by a formal confession which was read by the minister in church

Samuel
Sewall.

while Judge Sewall stood with bowed head in the presence of the congregation. Sewall was prominent in public affairs and in church and college matters. He was three times married, and he carefully records the courtships which led to his second and third weddings. Thus his diary presents a vivid picture of the public and private life of the time, besides disclosing a singularly pure, manly, and gentle character.

If we were to judge by amount of production, two of the greatest authors who ever lived were Increase and Cotton Mather. It is the fashion to speak of the Mather dynasty, as there are four generations of ministers of that name. But really the first and the last were of no special influence or prominence. The second and third were mighty men of renown in old New England, perhaps the most perfect examples of the puritan minister to be found in history. Increase Mather was born at Dorchester, June 21, 1639, and received his name from the remarkable increase in the population of the colony that year. He was educated at Dublin University and began his ministry in England; but the Restoration of the Stuarts sent him back to New England, and he became pastor of the Old North Church in Boston. He was for a long time president of Harvard College, and was active and prominent in all public matters. He issued one hundred and thirty-six publications, most of which are forgotten. The one that is best known was entitled "An Essay for the Recording of Illustrious Providences," pub-

Increase
Mather,
1639-1723.

"Illustrious
Provi-
dences,"
1684.

lished in Boston, 1684. It is filled with strange stories of witchcraft and other marvels.

An even more imposing figure in the colonial period was Cotton Mather, the son of Increase. Born in 1663, he was a wonder of precocity. At the age of eleven he was a Freshman at Harvard. At fifteen he took the degree of B.A., and at eighteen that of M.A., the subject of his thesis for the latter being "The Divine Origin of the Hebrew Vowel Points." His published works number three hundred and eighty-three titles. He was a marvel of multifarious learning and of industry, but he seems to have been inferior to his father in practical ability. Sewall appears not to have liked him very well; and perhaps this dislike was one of the principal hindrances in the way of his ambition to succeed his father in the presidency of Harvard. He was his father's associate and successor as pastor of the Old North Church. The wrong-headed character of much of his work is illustrated by his laborious translation of the Psalms of David from the Hebrew into English blank verse, probably of all possible forms the worst adapted to the rendering of the spirit of the original. His monumental work is the "Magnalia Christi Americana; or the Ecclesiastical History of New England from its First Plantation in the Year 1620 unto the Year of our Lord 1698." The book is an ill-digested, rambling collection of historical matter connected with Church and State and the personal lives of prominent ministers and officials. It is a book to be dug into by the

Cotton
Mather,
1663-1728.

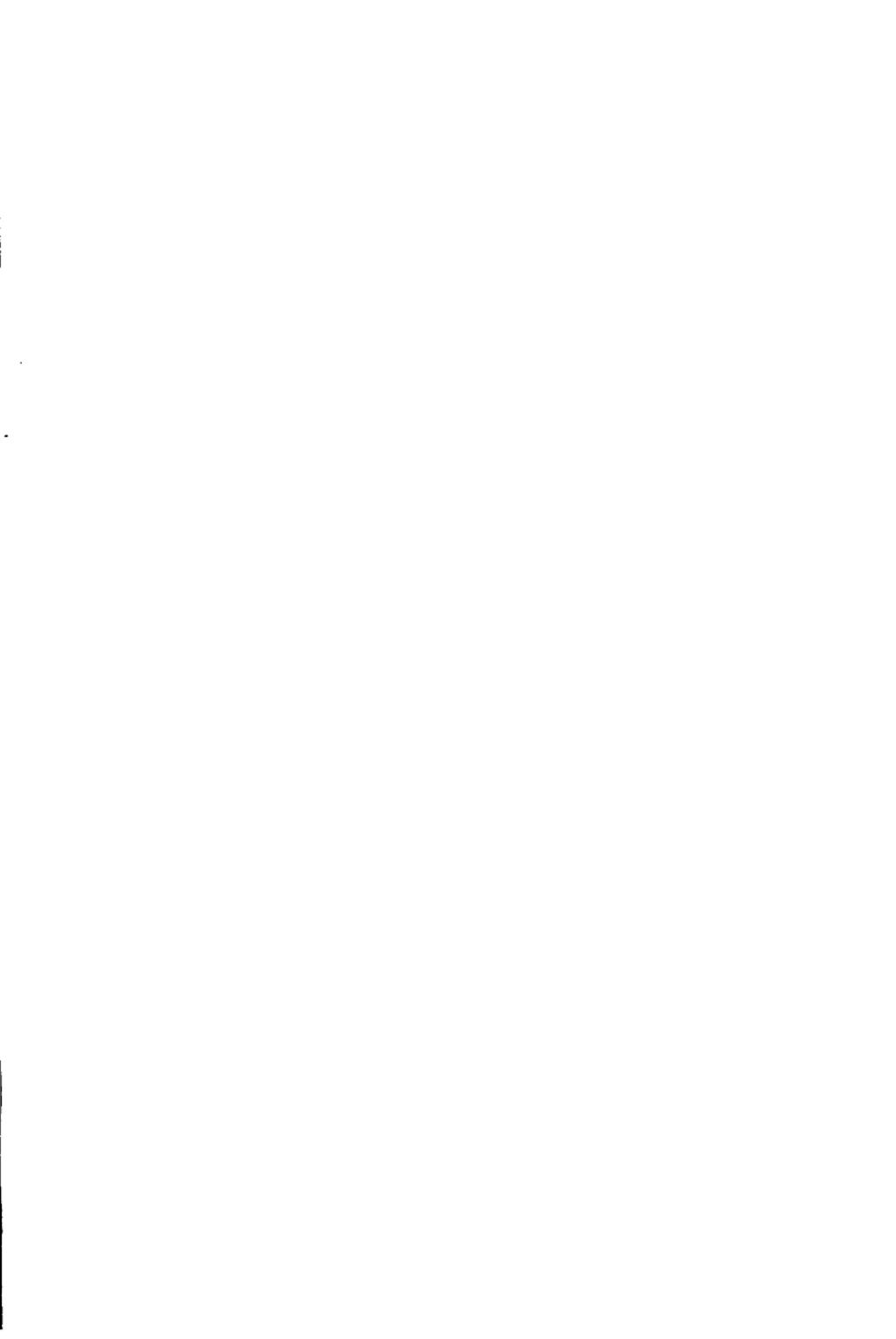
"Magnalia
Christi
Americana,"
1702.

historian; not one to be enjoyed by the general reader.

There was one man of this period who seems never to have believed in the witchcraft phenomena, the accounts of which formed a considerable part of the writings of the Mathers. Robert Calef, a Boston merchant, published in London, 1705, a book called "More Wonders of the Invisible World; or the Wonders of the Invisible World Displayed." It was an attack upon the publications of Increase and Cotton Mather on the subject of witchcraft, and an acute argument against the theory that the phenomena ascribed to witchcraft were the results of demoniac possession or of commerce with the devil. The book gave such offence that, by command of Increase Mather, it was publicly burned at Harvard Square. This is probably the only instance in American history of the official burning of an heretical book. Whittier has imagined a meeting between this clear-thinking merchant and the imperious puritan minister, and finely described it in one of his earlier poems, "Calef in Boston, 1692."

For a great many years, almanacs—little books containing astronomical information, calendars, etc., combined with a great variety of historical, practical, and literary matter—were found in almost all American homes. They have been an important educational influence; and one of the most famous of American writings, Benjamin Franklin's "Poor Richard," was issued in that form. These facts give importance to the issue of the

Robert Calef,
"More Won-
ders of the
Invisible
World," 1705.





Jonathan Edwards

first "Almanac," in 1725, by Nathaniel Ames; three years before James Franklin published the "Rhode Island Almanac," which preceded "Poor Richard."

Nathaniel
Ames'
"Almanac,"
1725.

It is a long step, in every sense of the word, from those we have been studying to the next name we shall consider. Jonathan Edwards is the one really great man of this period. He was unquestionably one of the keenest intellects and strongest spirits of the world's history. His work, while not of a character to attract general interest now, has been very powerful in its influence over thoughtful minds; and, directly or indirectly, by attraction or repulsion, it is responsible for much of the serious thoughtful writing of the last century. He is too exclusively thought of as a great theologian, and especially as a preacher, in terrible forms, of future punishment. It is true that, with a creative imagination, and with masterful command of language, he expressed what was generally believed as to future punishment; and the result is awful in its gloomy grandeur. In this respect it is not out of place to call him the Dante of the Pulpit. But this does not represent the most important or the most characteristic side of his mind. His "Freedom of the Will" is one of the greatest, and for two generations was to America one of the most influential, works of philosophy. He was also a keen observer of nature and student of the human mind, and described the working of the human affections in a book which has been a classic of Christian devotion. He was a leader in practical affairs also, and sacrificed everything dear to him in

Jonathan
Edwards,
1703-1758.

his professional life to what he felt to be an important moral issue.

He was born at East Windsor, Connecticut, in 1703; graduated at Yale, 1719; ordained at Northampton, Massachusetts, 1727; went to Stockbridge as missionary to the Indians, 1751; was installed as president of Princeton College in 1758, and died the same year. I will take for specimens of the work of Edwards some brief extracts showing different aspects of his many-sided nature. And first a single sentence from the famous sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," will be enough to represent that well-known phase of his thinking. In reading this, bear in mind that, to Edwards' thinking, a sinner was one who deliberately, by choice, set his will against that of God; and God was felt to be the centre and source of all conceivable wisdom, goodness, and power. Toleration of evil was to him utterly inconsistent with perfect goodness; and the "sinner" is here conceived of as having chosen evil instead of God.

"*Sinners in
the Hands of
an Angry
God.*"

The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours.

This seems very far away from any modern way of thinking about God and man. Place in con-

trast with it a passage in which Edwards comes very near to the most attractive forms of modern Christian thinking. This selection is taken from a volume called "Observations concerning the Scripture Oeconomy of the Trinity," edited by Egbert C. Smyth, and published in 1880:

So that, when we are delighted with flowery meadows, and gentle breezes of wind, we may consider that we see only the emanations of the sweet benevolence of Jesus Christ. When we behold the fragrant rose and lily, we see His love and purity. So the green trees, and fields, and singing of birds are the emanations of His infinite joy and benignity. The easiness and naturalness of trees and birds are shadows of His beauty and loveliness. The crystal rivers and murmuring streams are the footsteps of His favor, grace, and beauty.

Better known, and letting us into the very heart of this great man, is the following, written in 1723, for no eyes but his own, and describing the lady who afterward was his wife:

They say there is a young lady in New Haven who is beloved of that Great Being, who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything except to meditate on him—that she expects after a while to be received up where he is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven; being assured that he loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from him always. There she is to dwell with him, and to be ravished with his love and delight forever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the riches of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it,

and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind and singular purity in her affections ; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct ; and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful, if you should give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind ; especially after this Great God has manifested himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly ; and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure ; and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her.

If we can find a quality common to these three so very different extracts, we will be very likely to find in it the quality most characteristic of the mind of Edwards. A little consideration will show this common quality to be the "God consciousness." It is because God is to him absolutely supreme that sin against God is to him so intolerably hateful. All nature is, in the second extract, conceived as the manifestation of God. And that which especially distinguishes the last selection from any lover's rhapsody, besides the beauty and purity of thought and style, is the same consciousness of God, pervading every line.

Besides sermons and pamphlets, Edwards' published writings, with the dates of their first appearance, are as follows :

Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God	1736
Treatise concerning the Religious Affections	1746
Modern Prevailing Notions of the Freedom of the Will .	1754
Treatise on Original Sin	1758
History of Redemption	1774

The awful doctrine which Edwards expressed in poetic prose was unconsciously caricatured by Michael Wigglesworth in very prosaic verse. His so-called poem, "The Day of Doom," was very widely read in the old days; but its own day of doom from the general public arrived long ago.

The first verse-writer of American birth, so far as known, was Benjamin Thompson, of Braintree, Massachusetts, one of the first masters of the Boston Latin School. He published, in 1675, some verses called "New England's Crisis," a description of King Philip's War. Like most of the ambitious verse of this period, it is written in the favorite measure of Pope, the rimed iambic pentameter.

The colonial period closes with the name of Thomas Godfrey. He wrote the first American dramatic poem, which appeared in Philadelphia, in 1765, two years after the author's death. It was called "The Prince of Parthia, a Tragedy," and was written in blank verse, composed with considerable skill; the dialogue is spirited, and there are passages of real poetic quality. Godfrey shows more of the literary spirit, that is, the love of writing for its own sake, as the chosen mode of expressing one's self, than does any other writer of the time. The others are all men of affairs with whom Literature is secondary. But this young Philadelphian, jeweller, soldier, traveller, was a writer to whom other forms of activity were secondary. Thus, though in no sense great, he is to all students of our Literature a very important and interesting character. I give as

Michael
Wiggles-
worth,
1631-1705.

Benjamin
Thompson,
1642-1714.

Thomas
Godfrey,
1736-1763.

the last selection for this period a few lines from the "Prince of Parthia."

"The Prince
of Parthia,"
1765.

Evanthe. When I am dead, dissolved to native dust,
Yet let me live in thy dear memory.

One tear will not be much to give Evanthe.

Arsaces. My eyes shall e'er two running fountains be,

5 And wet thy urn with overflowing tears;
Joy ne'er again within my breast shall find
A residence. Oh ! speak once more !

Evanthe. Life's just out —

My father — Oh ! protect his honored age,
10 And give him shelter from the storms of fate!
He's long been fortune's sport — support me — ah! —
I can no more — my glass is spent — farewell —
Forever — *Arsaces* — Oh !

Arsaces. Stay ! oh stay!

15 Or take me with thee — dead ! she's cold and dead !
Her eyes are closed ! and all my joys are flown.
Now burst ye elements from your restraint !
Let order cease and chaos be again.
Break ! break ! tough heart. Oh torture ! life dissolve !
20 Why stand ye idle ? Have I not one friend
To kindly free me from this pain ? One blow,
One friendly blow would give me ease.

These lines show comparative ease in using the measure employed. Notice how in the passages of greatest excitement of feeling, from lines 11-20, the metrical accents correspond with the rhetorical ; and how the broken line, 8, corresponds with the weak and broken utterance of the dying girl. While, historically, Godfrey's name is much less important than many others we have considered, he gives us, more than any of them, the promise of an artistic Literature, and so with him we fittingly close one period of our study.

QUESTIONS

What marked differences were there between the beginnings of American and British history which affected strongly the beginnings of Literature in the two countries? When was the Virginia colony founded? What were some of the chief incidents in the career of John Smith? Give some account of the "True Relation." What famous story is in "The General History of Virginia"? What are some of the literary qualities displayed in this story? What early colonial writing is associated with one of the plays of Shakespeare, and how? What translation of classical poetry was made in America during the colonial period? What was the character of the writings of Alexander Whittaker? When was the Plymouth colony founded? Who were the "Pilgrims"? Who were the "Puritans"? What were some of the chief incidents in the life of William Bradford? Compare the extract from his writings with that from John Smith. What sort of a man was Thomas Morton, and what was the character of his book? For what was Roger Williams famous? What was the nature of John Eliot's work, and what literary monument did he leave? Give some account of the life and writings of Nathaniel Ward. Give some account of the life and writings of Anne Bradstreet. When was the first college founded in America? When was the first book printed in America, and what was it? When was the first newspaper established in America? What was the character and influence of John Bartram? What was the nature of the writings of Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur? Give some account of Sewall's Diary. Give some account of the life and of the writings of Increase and Cotton Mather. What was the relation of these three men and of Robert Calef to the witchcraft delusion? Who was the first to prepare a popular "Almanac"? Give some of the particulars of the life and writings of Jonathan Edwards. What characteristic is found in the three extracts from his writings? Who was the first writer of verse born in America? Who was our first dramatic poet? What are some of the elements of excellence in his writings?

CHAPTER II

PERIOD OF THE LATER EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, 1765-1800

THE colonial period is to be considered only as introductory to the history of American Literature. Thus far we have found but one name which deserves to be recorded for the actual achievement in Literature for which it stands. Jonathan Edwards left writings which have survived, been read and republished for a hundred and fifty years. The others left writings indeed; but they are read mainly for their historical interest. The men are of importance in our early history. What they wrote is of importance because it illustrates them and the events connected with their lives. We can detect real Literature by the fact that in its study we reverse the process, and read the life and history for the sake of illustrating the writings. The same thing is true in general of the period we now study. But there is more than one name of real interest to Literature, though only one name of such interest as that of Edwards.

We notice in the writings of this time a growing independence of thought, following upon and connected with political independence. There is a manifest reaction from the theological type of think-



Benj Franklin



ing of the colonial times toward Materialism. This is partly the reflection of the Deistic philosophy which was influential in all European thought during the eighteenth century. It took a special tone and quality in our country from the influence of the French. The Revolution naturally tended to weaken the influence of British thought, and as naturally to strengthen the influence of French thought, upon America. The French helped us in the war. French officers were popular in the social life of the time. It was thus inevitable that French thought should make itself felt. In the form of what was written, however, we cannot fail to notice the influence of the so-called "classical," or Queen Anne, period of English Literature. Franklin's style was formed by close and laborious study of Addison; and the verse of the period was largely modelled upon Pope.

One of the most popular books ever published in America was Trumbull's "McFingal." It is a satirical Epic poem, the satire being directed against the "Tories" of the Revolutionary War. John Trumbull was born in Connecticut and graduated at Yale College. He wrote essays in the style of the "Spectator," and verse in the classical style; published the first part of "McFingal" in 1774, and the second part in 1782. The name was taken from Fingal, the hero of "Ossian," and the general style was based upon that of Butler's "Hudibras." "McFingal" ran rapidly through thirty editions. The first part was of great influence in strengthening the

John
Trumbull,
1750-1831.

"McFingal,"
1774-1782.

Whigs and discouraging the Tories. There is one couplet in it which has become a popular proverb, and which will probably always be quoted:

No man e'er felt the halter draw,
With good opinion of the law.

“McFingal” is of great interest historically. It gives pictures of the New England town meeting; of the setting up of a liberty pole; of a riot between Whigs and Tories, ending in the tarring and feathering of one of the latter; and of a secret meeting of Tories in a Boston cellar. We will take a passage for special study.

McFINGAL, CANTO III

When now the mob in lucky hour,
Had got their en'mies in their pow'r,
They first proceed by wise command,
To take the Constable in hand;
5 Then from the pole's sublimest top
They speeded to let down the rope,
At once its other end in haste bind,
And make it fast upon his waistband,
Till, like the earth, as stretch'd on tenter,
10 He hung self-balanced on his centre.
Then upwards, all hands hoisting sail,
They swung him, like a keg of ale,
Till to the pinnacle so fair,
He arose like meteor in the air.
15 As Socrates of old at first did,
To aid philosophy, get hoisted,
And found his thoughts flow strangely clear,
Swung in a basket in mid air:
Our culprit thus in purer sky,
20 With like advantage raised his eye;
And looking forth in prospect wide,

His Tory errors clearly spy'd,
 And from his elevated station,
 With bawling voice began addressing :
 25 “ Good gentlemen, and friends, and kin,
 For heav'n's sake hear, if not for mine !
 I here renounce the Pope, the Turks,
 The King, the Devil, and all their works ;
 And will, set me but once at ease,
 30 Turn Whig or Christian, what you please ;
 And always mind your laws as justly ;
 Should I live long as old Methus'lah,
 I'll never join with British rage,
 Nor help Lord North, or General Gage,
 35 Nor lift my gun in future fights,
 Nor take away your chartered rights ;
 Nor overcome your new rais'd levies,
 Destroy your towns, nor burn your navies ;
 Nor cut your poles down while I've breath,
 40 Though rais'd more thick than hatchel teeth :
 But leave King George and all his elves
 To do their conqu'ring work themselves.”

* * * * * *

Not so our 'squire submits to rule,
 But stood heroic as a mule.
 45 “ You'll find it all in vain,” quoth he,
 “ To play your rebel tricks on me.
 All punishments the world can render,
 Serve only to provoke th' offender ;
 The will's confirmed by treatment horrid,
 50 As hides grow harder when they're curried ;
 No man e'er felt the halter draw,
 With good opinion of the law ;
 Or held in method orthodox,
 His love of justice in the stocks ;
 55 Or failed to lose by sheriff's shears
 At once his loyalty and ears.”

This is a good example of what may be called “mock Epic” verse. It is the rimed iambic

tetrameter. The famous couplet, lines 51-52, is perfect in form. Each line has four iambic feet; and the rimes are perfect. There is an example of feminine rime at lines 47-48; and an imperfect attempt at the same in the two following lines. Other imperfect rimes are found in the lines 15-16, 23-24, 25-26, 31-32, 37-38, 39-40. The last four lines of the selection allude to modes of punishment which were still practised in the colonial times, but which have passed out of use now. Sewall's Diary speaks of a criminal's ears being cut off in the court room. The extreme Whig feeling is satirized in lines 27-28, in which the Constable renounces the King along with Pope, Turk, and Devil. There are other allusions in this selection to events, customs, and characters of the time, which would repay study; and the poem is full of such. It is probable that a hundred years hence "McFingal" will be more generally considered worthy of study than it is to-day, as the historical side gains interest with the passage of time, and it has sufficient artistic excellence to insure its preservation.

Timothy
Dwight,
1752-1817.

A friend and fellow-student of Trumbull was Timothy Dwight, afterwards president of Yale, and the grandfather of the present President Dwight. He published an extended meditative poem, called "Greenfield Hill." But he is better remembered by the simple but strong hymn which has made its place in the hearts of many, "I Love thy Kingdom, Lord."

Joel Barlow was also born in Connecticut, and

graduated from Yale College. His life was one of great activity and usefulness. He was United States consul at Algiers, and minister to France, and died in Poland, having been summoned to meet Napoleon Bonaparte at the time of the French retreat from Moscow. In 1787 he published "The Vision of Columbus," a stately, prosy production in nine cantos of iambic pentameter verse. The vision extends over America from the equator to the north pole, and includes its history, from the imaginary origin of the native tribes, by way of Peru, Mexico, and the discoveries of Columbus and others, through the Revolution, and on into the future. In later life the work was enlarged and extended, the fuller version being published in sumptuous style, and called "The Columbiad." A more popular publication was the semi-humorous poem on New England manners, called "Hasty Pudding." Barlow's movements are always on a grand scale, and his humor even is rather elephantine.

Joel Barlow,
1754-1812.

"Vision of
Columbus,"
1787.

Alexander Wilson is better remembered for his services to science as the first distinguished American ornithologist, than for his literary work. But it is a question whether he was not more a literary man than a scientist. He was born in Scotland in 1766, and before he came to this country in 1793 had published a volume of poems in the Scotch dialect. One of his poems was ascribed to Burns, and was not altogether unworthy of the compliment. He became an enthusiastic American in his feelings, and wrote much in prose and verse which shows loving and

Alexander
Wilson,
1766-1813.

close observation of nature in its characteristically American aspects. "The Foresters" is an extended descriptive poem, the subject of which is a pedestrian journey from Philadelphia to Niagara Falls. It is written in excellent rimed iambic pentameter lines, and has a number of passages of real poetic feeling. These lines from the beginning of the poem show the purpose of the writer, and illustrate the characteristic which makes Wilson's work so interesting and important in the history of American Literature.

Yet Nature's charms that bloom so lovely here,
 Unhailed arrive, unheeded disappear ;
 While bare bleak heaths, and brooks of half a mile
 Can rouse the thousand bards of Britain's Isle.
 There scarce a stream creeps down its narrow bed,
 There scarce a hillock lifts its little head,
 Or humble hamlet peeps their glades among,
 But lives and murmurs in immortal song ;
 Our western world, with all its matchless floods,
 Our vast transparent lakes and boundless woods,
 Stamped with the traits of majesty sublime;
 Unhonored weep the silent lapse of Time,
 Spread their wild grandeur to the unconscious sky,
 In sweetest seasons pass unheeded by ;
 While scarce one Muse returns the songs they gave,
 Or seeks to snatch their glories from the grave.

Lyric Verse.

In general the songs of the Revolution have not much merit, but Hopkinson's "Battle of the Kegs" was very popular, and E. P. Whipple says that it "laughed thousands of men into the patriot army." This was Francis Hopkinson, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and a man of great

Francis
Hopkinson,
1737-1791.



F. R. & Son

Philip Turner

prominence in public affairs. His son, Joseph Hopkinson, wrote, in 1798, the song "Hail Columbia," which was probably our most popular national song until, in our own days, "My Country, 'tis of Thee" was written.

Joseph
Hopkinson,
1770-1842.

Phillis Wheatley Peters, a negro servant of Mr. John Wheatley, of Boston, published, in 1773, a volume of poems. They are correct and smooth in versification, and the thought is elevated and not more prosaic than that of most of the verse of the time. This negro girl, born in Africa and nurtured in slavery, writes as good poetry, to say the least, as the theologian Dwight or the statesman Barlow.

Phillis
Wheatley
Peters,
1754-1784.

The real lyric poet of this period, however, is Philip Freneau, who was born in New York, graduated at Princeton College, and lived in New Jersey. There is real music in some of his verse, and he finds the material for poetic thought in the simple objects of nature. His poetry is thus a prelude to that song which rang so sweet and clear in Bryant. The "Wild Honeysuckle" and the "Honey Bee" show, in less degree, the same qualities as the "Fringed Gentian" and the "Waterfowl." In his use of Indian themes, also, Freneau shows a tendency to seek his own materials and methods of expression rather than copy others. One of his poems will repay careful study:

Philip
Freneau,
1752-1832.

THE WILD HONEYSUCKLE

Fair flower, that dost so comely grow,
 Hid in the silent, dull retreat,
Untouched thy honied blossoms blow,

Unseen thy little branches greet ;
 No roving foot shall crush thee here,
 No busy hand provoke a tear.

By Nature's self in white arrayed,
 She bade thee shun the vulgar eye,
 And planted here the guardian shade,
 And sent soft waters murmuring by ;
 Thus quietly thy summer goes,
 Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
 I grieve to see your future doom ;
 They died — nor were those flowers more gay,
 The flowers that did in Eden bloom ;
 Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power,
 Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
 At first thy little being came ;
 If nothing once, you nothing lose,
 For when you die you are the same ;
 The space between is but an hour,
 The frail duration of a flower.

The stanzas are simply constructed ; just six iambic tetrameter lines. And the rime arrangement, though a well-known one, shows artistic adaptation of form to thought. Each stanza is divided into two parts. One part has four lines of alternating rimes, and the other has two riming together. In each stanza this closing couplet states the thought suggested by the preceding quatrain. Some of the lines are very musical, and express the thought in very clear and condensed form. Notice among the best in these respects :

And sent soft waters murmuring by.
 Thy days declining to repose.
 The frail duration of a flower.

The third stanza seems somewhat prosaic compared with the others. It states too fully ideas that would be better expressed if simply suggested. There is an anticlimax in the line "Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power," the last words being obviously introduced for the sake of the rime. Altogether the poem would be more complete without this stanza. But there is far more to praise than to blame in this little poem. The lines are perfect, the rimes are true, and the thought is genuinely poetic.

Dramatic Literature has two names of interest during this period. The first American play put upon the stage was a comedy, called "The Contrast," written by Royall Tyler, and produced in New York in 1786. William Dunlap, who has a stronger claim to memory as a painter and as the founder of the National Academy of Design, wrote a number of plays. Among them, "Leicester" enjoys the distinction of being the first American tragedy presented upon the stage.

The prose writings of this period are of far more importance than those in verse, and we have some interesting examples of narrative writing. Hannah Adams published, in 1799, a "History of New England"; and the great jurist, John Marshall, issued his "Life of Washington," which will always be a standard biography of the great first President. A work of a much lower grade measured by the standard of the best historical writing, but of great interest nevertheless, is the gossipy "Life of Washington," by Mason Locke Weems. It is this book which has

The Drama.

Royall Tyler,
1758-1826.

William
Dunlap,
1766-1839.

Prose Narration.

Hannah
Adams,
1755-1832.

John
Marshall,
1755-1835.

Mason Locke
Weems,
1760-1825.

preserved for us a number of such incidents as the famous hatchet story.

Benjamin Franklin,
born in
Boston, 1706;
died in
Philadelphia,
1790.

Reference has been already made to Benjamin Franklin. His is the one name in this period of equal interest from a literary standpoint with that of Jonathan Edwards. Many would say that his name is of much the greater interest. Indeed, not a few good judges would say that, on the whole, Benjamin Franklin is the greatest man whom America has produced. He was born in Boston in 1706. He learned the printer's trade with an older brother, and in 1723 went to Philadelphia. He obtained employment as a printer, and attracted the attention of the governor, Sir William Keith, who made him such promises as to induce him to go to London. Keith's promises all failed, and Franklin was thrown entirely upon his own resources; but he obtained employment at his trade, and made the acquaintance of some well-known men. In 1726 he returned to Philadelphia. In 1729 he became proprietor of the "Pennsylvania Gazette," and from that time his influence and reputation grew rapidly. He founded a club called "The Junto," out of which grew the "Pennsylvania Philosophical Society." He founded the Philadelphia Library, and a school which developed into the University of Pennsylvania. He invented a stove; and discovered the fact that lightning is the effect of electricity. He was made Deputy Postmaster-General of the colonies; and made the postal service self-supporting. He was a prominent figure in colonial politics. He was largely instru-

mental in bringing the colonies together in the Confederation which made it possible to successfully resist the measures of the British Parliament. He went to England as the representative of the colony of Pennsylvania in 1757; and afterwards was chosen to be the agent in England of Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Georgia. He labored earnestly to prevent a separation between the colonies and England; but after the events of the spring of 1775, which made separation inevitable, he became a zealous supporter of the war, and an advocate of independence. He was one of the committee with Jefferson to draw up the famous Declaration. His services were invaluable in securing and maintaining the alliance with France to which the success of the Revolution was largely due; and he had an important part in the making of the treaty of peace in 1783. This rapid review of his career may serve to show how wide was the reach of his mental powers, and how eminently practical was the bent of his genius; qualities which are abundantly illustrated in his writings. His works include a great variety of state papers, of articles for newspaper publication, of scientific discussions and lectures; besides the two works by which he is best known. These, by the date of their appearing, would belong to the previous period; but Franklin belongs historically to the time of the Revolution, and it therefore seems best to discuss his writings here.

Probably the most popular of all his publications "Poor Richard." was "Poor Richard's Almanac," which appeared

"Autobiography."

first in 1732. It is filled with pithy proverbial sayings, and useful information. The work, however, by which he is now best known as a writer, was not intended at first for publication. It is his "Autobiography," written for his son. This has been published a great many times and very widely read. It gives an account of his early life, down to the year 1757, when he went to England as a commissioner for the colony of Pennsylvania. John Bigelow prepared an edition of this with a selection of Franklin's letters and other papers, giving almost his whole life in his own words. Of the two selections given below the first describes his arrival in Philadelphia, and the second gives us a hint as to how he secured his excellent English style.

I was in my working dress, my best cloathes being to come around by sea. I was dirty from my journey; my pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no soul nor where to look for lodging. I was fatigued with travelling, rowing and want of rest, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted of a Dutch dollar, and about a shilling in copper. The latter I gave the people of the boat for my passage, who at first refused it, on account of my rowing; but I insisted on their taking it. A man being sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little.

Then I walked up the street, gazing about till near the market-house I met a boy with bread. I had made many a meal on bread, and, inquiring where he got it, I went immediately to the baker's he directed me to, in Second-street, and asked for bisket, intending such as we had in Boston; but they,

it seems, were not made in Philadelphia. Then I asked for a threepenny loaf, and was told they had none such. So not considering or knowing the difference of money, and the greater cheapness nor the names of his bread, I bad him give me three pennyworth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surpriz'd at the quantity, but took it, and having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market-street as far as Fourth-street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father; when she, standing at the door, saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut-street and part of Walnut-street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself again at Market-street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

The great excellence of this little bit of narrative is in its clearness. There is not a word wasted; and neither is there a word wanting to make the picture perfectly clear. We can see the queer figure with the pockets stuffed out, a roll under each arm, and we can see Miss Read smile as she catches her first glimpse of the grotesque form which was to be so honored by her and many others in the years to come. This vividness is gained by selecting the details which make the picture clear, and omitting a hundred others which an unskilful writer would have given. A good deal of the effect is due to the simplicity of the style. There are very few long words

or words of Latin origin. The passage is largely composed of short, homely Saxon words, suited to the subject. The following extract will illustrate the same qualities, and will help us to see how they are secured. It is from an earlier part of the "Autobiography," referring to the time when he was working in his brother's printing office in Boston.

About this time I met with an odd volume of the Spectator. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With that view, I took some of the papers, and making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, try'd to compleat the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my Spectator with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rhyme, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again. I also sometimes jumbled my collection of hints into confusion, and after some weeks endeavored to reduce them

into the best order, before I began to form the full sentences and compleat the paper. This was to teach me method in the arrangement of thoughts. By comparing my work afterwards with the original, I discovered many faults and amended them; but I sometimes had the pleasure of fancying that, in certain particulars of small import, I had been lucky enough to improve the method or the language, and this encouraged me to think I might possibly in time come to be a tolerable English writer, of which I was extreamly ambitious.

A good exercise for any one who has Franklin's ambition in this respect, would be to take Franklin's "Autobiography" and use it as he used the "Spec-tator."

A very different autobiography, but one as excellent in its way as Franklin's, is that of John Woolman. Woolman was a New Jersey Friend, or Quaker, who, in 1742, was impressed with the wrong of human slavery, and devoted his life to the work of persuading the "Society of Friends" to make slave-holding inconsistent with membership. His journal is a beautiful example of autobiography. It is a simple and clear expression of one of the finest spirits that ever lived. Charles Lamb wrote once, "Get the writings of John Woolman by heart." And John G. Whittier prepared an edition of the journal with an introduction by himself which was published¹ in 1871. I give a brief extract from this edition, page 224:

John
Woolman,
born in New
Jersey, 1720;
died in
England,
1772.

¹ By Fields, Osgood & Co., now Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

Eleventh of sixth month, 1769.—There have been sundry cases of late years within the limits of our Monthly Meeting, respecting the exercising of pure righteousness towards the negroes, in which I have lived under a labor of heart that equity might be steadily preserved. On this account I have had some close exercises among Friends, in which, I may thankfully say, I find peace. And as my meditations have been on universal love, my own conduct in time past became of late very grievous to me. As persons setting negroes free in our province are bound by law to maintain them in case they have need of relief, some in the time of my youth who scrupled to keep slaves for term of life were wont to detain their young negroes in their service without wages till they were thirty years of age. With this custom I so far agreed that being joined with another Friend in executing the will of a deceased Friend, I once sold a negro lad till he might attain the age of thirty years, and applied the money to the use of the estate.

With abasement of heart I may now say that sometimes as I have sat in a meeting with my heart exercised towards that awful Being who respecteth not persons nor colors, and have thought upon this lad, I have felt that all was not clear in my mind respecting him ; and as I have attended to this exercise and fervently sought the Lord, it hath appeared to me that I should make some restitution ; but in what way I saw not till lately, when being under some concern that I might be resigned to go on a visit to some part of the West Indies, and under close engagement of spirit seeking to the Lord for counsel herein, the aforesaid transaction came heavily upon me, and my mind for a time was covered with darkness and sorrow. Under this sore affliction my mind was softened to receive instruction, and I now first perceived that as I had been one of the two executors who had sold this lad for nine years longer than is common for our own children to serve, so I should now offer part of my substance

to redeem the last half of the nine years ; but as the time was not yet come, I executed a bond, binding myself and my executors to pay the man to whom he was sold what to candid men might appear equitable for the last four and a half years of his time, in case the said youth should be living, and in a condition likely to provide comfortably for himself.

If the last selection from Franklin might be called mental biography, this should be named the biography of a soul. The tenderness of conscience revealed is joined with a careful accuracy in planning to make exactly the restitution due, no more and no less, which is very characteristic. He shows that, unlike some reformers, he is as concerned for his own misdeeds as for those of others. The Quaker habit of thought appears in almost every line, though as it happens there is scarcely any occasion in this selection for the use of the Quaker speech.

In this period belongs our first important writer of fiction. Charles Brockden Brown lived and wrote in Philadelphia. He studied law, but abandoned it for Literature. He is the first American to make Literature actually the chief occupation of his life. His works of fiction belong to the class of Romances. They are generally stories of improbable adventures and extraordinary characters. He had a powerful imagination ; and his leading characters are strongly and impressively drawn. He wrote, however, too rapidly for the best results. His stories are rather clumsily constructed and he lacks delicacy of touch and fineness of finish. His principal works are :

Charles
Brockden
Brown, born
in Philadel-
phia, 1771 ;
died, 1810.

Wieland, or the Transformation	1798
Ormond, or the Secret Witness	1799
Arthur Mervyn	1799-1800
Jane Talbot	1801
Edgar Huntley	1801
Clara Howard	1801

The dates show the rapidity with which Brown produced his romances. Six books within four years; and the last three issued in the same year. "Arthur Mervyn" has special historical interest, as it has for the background of its pictures of life the terrible yellow fever plague at Philadelphia in 1793. It has scenes of great power and shows some dramatic force; but like the other writings of Brown, it is hurriedly and loosely constructed. It lacks logical connection between its events. The actions are improbable; which, in a romance, they may properly be. But they also seem improbable, which is a fatal defect; that is, Brown does not succeed in throwing around the strange events he records that atmosphere of reality which characterizes the work of the great romancers.

As Brown stands at the head of our long line of excellent writers of fiction, a short extract from one of his books is given, if only that we may have something with which to compare the better work of later times. The following paragraphs are from the description of the plague-stricken city, in Chapter XV of "Arthur Mervyn":

In proportion as I drew near the city, the tokens of its calamitous condition became more apparent. Every farm-

house was filled with supernumerary tenants, fugitives from home, and haunting the skirts of the road, eager to detain every passenger with inquiries after news. The passengers were numerous ; for the tide of emigration was by no means exhausted. Some were on foot, bearing in their countenances the tokens of their recent terror, and filled with mournful reflections on the forlornness of their state. Few had secured to themselves an asylum ; some were without the means of paying for victuals or lodging for the coming night ; others, who were not thus destitute, yet knew not whither to apply for entertainment, every house being already overstocked with inhabitants, or barring its inhospitable doors at their approach.

Families of weeping mothers and dismayed children, attended with a few pieces of indispensable furniture, were carried in vehicles of every form. The parent or husband had perished ; and the price of some movable, or the pittance handed forth by public charity, had been expended to purchase the means of retiring from this theatre of disasters, though uncertain and hopeless of accommodation in the neighboring districts.

Between these and the fugitives whom curiosity had led to the road, dialogues frequently took place, to which I was suffered to listen. From every mouth the tale of sorrow was repeated with new aggravations. Pictures of their own distress, or of that of their neighbors, were exhibited in all the hues which imagination can annex to pestilence and poverty.

* * * * *

The sun had nearly set before I reached the precincts of the city. I pursued the track which I had formerly taken, and entered High Street after nightfall. Instead of equipages and a throng of passengers, the voice of levity and glee, which I had formerly observed, and which the mildness of the season would, at other times, have produced, I found nothing but a dreary solitude.

The market-place, and each side of this magnificent avenue, were illuminated, as before, by lamps; but between the verge of SCHUYLKILL and the heart of the city, I met not more than a dozen figures; and these were ghostlike, wrapped in cloaks, from behind which they cast upon me glances of wonder and suspicion, and, as I approached, changed their course, to avoid touching me. Their clothes were sprinkled with vinegar, and their nostrils defended from contagion by some powerful perfume.

I cast a look upon the houses, which I recollect to have formerly been, at this hour, brilliant with lights, resounding with lively voices, and thronged with busy faces. Now they were closed, above and below; dark, and without tokens of being inhabited. From the upper windows of some, a gleam sometimes fell upon the pavement I was traversing, and showed that their tenants had not fled, but were secluded or disabled.

These tokens were new, and awakened all my panics. Death seemed to hover over this scene, and I dreaded that the floating pestilence had already lighted on my frame. I had scarcely overcome these tremors, when I approached a house the door of which was opened, and before which stood a vehicle, which I presently recognized to be a *hearse*.

The driver was seated on it. I stood still to mark his visage, and to observe the course which he proposed to take. Presently a coffin, borne by two men, issued from the house. The driver was a negro; but his companions were white. Their features were marked by ferocious indifference to danger or pity. One of them, as he assisted in thrusting the coffin into the cavity provided for it, said, "I'll be d—d if I think the poor dog was quite dead. It wasn't the fever that ailed him, but the sight of the girl and her mother on the floor. I wonder how they all got into that room. What carried them there?"

The other surlily muttered, "Their legs, to-be-sure."

"But what should they hug together in one room for?"

"To save us trouble, to-be-sure."

"And I thank them with all my heart ; but d— it, it wasn't right to put him in his coffin before the breath was fairly gone. I thought the last look he gave me told me to stay a few minutes."

"Pshaw ! he could not live. The sooner dead the better for him ; as well as for us. Did you mark how he eyed us when we carried away his wife and daughter? I never cried in my life, since I was knee high, but curse me if I ever felt in better tune for the business than just then. Hey !" continued he, looking up, and observing me standing a few paces distant, and listening to their discourse ; "what's wanted? Anybody dead?"

I stayed not to answer or parley, but hurried forward. My joints trembled, and cold drops stood on my forehead. I was ashamed of my own infirmity ; and, by vigorous efforts of my reason, regained some degree of composure. The evening had now advanced, and it behoved me to procure accommodation at some of the inns.

Notice, in the plan of this description, three main elements. First it is skilfully introduced, by the approach to the city, gradually preparing the reader for the terrible scenes to be related later. Then contrast is effectively employed, by reminding the reader of the former visit, when everything was cheerful and prosperous ; and finally the most terrible features of the situation, especially the brutalizing effect upon character, are very vividly brought out by the conversation of the men who are removing the bodies. The chief defect of the style, as compared with De Foe's "Description of the Plague in London," for example, is a rather turgid diction in some places ; such phrases as "magnificent avenue"

and "the pavement I was traversing," for instance, savoring somewhat of rhetorical "fine writing."

Exposition.

During the Revolutionary War and the years immediately following, when the Constitution was under discussion and our government in process of formation, most of the greatest minds were absorbed in public affairs. There is a large body of important and interesting writings which may be classified as Exposition. Articles were prepared for the journals, and state papers were written by different public men of the time. Among these two great documents ought to be familiar to every American: the Declaration of Independence, prepared by a committee of the Continental Congress, but whose original draft—which was very slightly altered—was written by Thomas Jefferson; and the Farewell Address to the American people by George Washington. These, however, belong to the political rather than the literary history of our country.

Thomas
Jefferson,
1743-1826.

Jefferson left a large body of writings, mostly political in their character, but informed with a markedly scholarly, if not strictly literary, quality. Some of his utterances have a fine proverbial terseness and force. Such, for example, is the famous saying which embodies a large part of his political philosophy: "It is error alone which needs the support of government; truth can stand by itself." His services to education were invaluable. He devised a complete system, beginning with primary instruction and completed in the great University of Virginia. A selected edition of the works of this great statesman,

making accessible that part of his writings which belongs to Literature, is one of the much-to-be-desired things which we do not yet possess.

In the discussions which preceded and led to the Declaration of Independence, one of the most popular and influential writers was Thomas Paine. He was born in England, but came to this country at the suggestion of Franklin. He published "Common Sense" in 1776. It was a pamphlet giving the arguments for independence, and had great influence. "The Crisis" was published at intervals during the war, and was also very popular. It contains the famous line, "These are the times that try men's souls." Later, Paine went to France, and took a creditable part in the French Revolution. The "Rights of Man" was a reply to Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution." The "Age of Reason" was a discussion of religious questions from a Deistic point of view.

Thomas
Paine,
1737-1809.

When the Constitution had been prepared by the Convention in 1787, it was submitted to the people for ratification. There was a great deal of opposition to it, and its adoption or rejection seems to have depended upon New York, where the people were divided in opinion. Therefore, three of the ablest men of the time prepared and published anonymously a series of papers explaining and defending the different provisions of the proposed Constitution. These papers were afterward collected in a volume called "The Federalist." To this day if any one desires to understand the intention of the provi-

"The
Federalist,"
1787.

sions of the Constitution, the best thing he can do is to study "The Federalist." The authors were John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton. It is not known with absolute certainty what is the authorship of all the papers, but Chancellor Kent's assignment is probably not far from right. Of the eighty-five papers he ascribes five to Jay, thirty to Madison, and fifty to Hamilton.

Alexander
Hamilton,
1757-1804

As an example of this form of writing, take some sentences from "The Federalist," No. 69, on the office of President, by Alexander Hamilton.

There is an idea, which is not without its advocates, that a vigorous Executive is inconsistent with the genius of republican Government. The enlightened well-wishers to this species of Government must at least hope that the supposition is destitute of foundation; since they can never admit its truth, without, at the same time, admitting the condemnation of their own principles. Energy in the Executive is a leading character in the definition of good Government. It is essential to the protection of the community against foreign attacks; it is not less essential to the steady administration of the laws; to the protection of property against those irregular and high-handed combinations which sometimes interrupt the ordinary course of justice; to the security of liberty against the enterprises and assaults of ambition, of faction, and of anarchy. Every man, the least conversant in Roman story, knows how often that Republic was obliged to take refuge in the absolute power of a single man, under the formidable title of Dictator, as well against the intrigues of ambitious individuals, who aspired to the tyranny, and the seditions of whole classes of the community, whose conduct threatened the existence of all government, as against the invasions of

external enemies, who menaced the conquest and destruction of Rome.

There can be no need, however, to multiply arguments or examples on this head. A feeble Executive implies a feeble execution of the Government. A feeble execution is but another phrase for a bad execution ; and a Government ill executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be, in practice, a bad Government.

Taking it for granted, therefore, that all men of sense will agree in the necessity of an energetic Executive, it will only remain to inquire, what are the ingredients, which constitute this energy ? How far can they be combined with those other ingredients which constitute safety in the republican sense ? And how far does this combination characterize the plan which has been reported by the Convention ?

The ingredients which constitute energy in the Executive are, first, unity ; secondly, duration ; thirdly, an adequate provision for its support ; fourthly, competent powers.

The ingredients which constitute safety in the republican sense are, first, a due dependence on the People ; secondly, a due responsibility.

The quality which impresses a careful student of this bit of exposition is the same which we noticed in Franklin's "Autobiography" ; namely, clearness. There is no possibility of an intelligent mind misunderstanding Hamilton's thought. This quality, however, is secured by very different means. The proportion of long words and words of Latin derivation is much larger. This is made necessary by the subject. Government was the great gift of the Romans to the world ; and, therefore, whenever we discuss government we necessarily use words of Latin origin. But in this selection the words are never needlessly long

or unfamiliar. They are always clearly adapted to the idea to be expressed. The sentences are admirably formed for clearness. Notice the succession of clauses about the disadvantage of a feeble executive. They are short, balanced, with just enough repetition of important words to carry the mind easily on from one thought to another, and aid in keeping the connection clear. "The Federalist" is perhaps the best example in our Literature of this type of composition.

Other authors of this class who ought to be noticed are the following: Benjamin Rush was a Philadelphia physician, who published, in 1798, "Essays, Literary, Moral, and Philosophical." Samuel Hopkins, of Newport, Rhode Island, was a leading theological writer of the time, and a pioneer in the antislavery contest. His character is beautifully portrayed in Mrs. Stowe's novel, "The Minister's Wooing." Alexander Wilson, who has been already mentioned, was a close friend of William Bartram, the son of John Bartram, and shared their enthusiasm in scientific research. Wilson's specialty was "bird-lore," and the work by which he is best known is his "Ornithology," especially interesting as one of the earliest examples of the literary record of the study of nature, which later became so important a part of our American prose.

Two books appeared during this period which are difficult to classify as Literature, but which have had great influence upon all writers since both in England and America. One is Noah Webster's Spelling

Benjamin
Rush,
1745-1813.

Samuel
Hopkins,
1721-1803.

Alexander
Wilson.

Webster's
Spelling
Book, 1784.

Book, which was published in 1784, and of which it is said that sixty-two million copies have been sold. Its sales largely supported Mr. Webster while he was working upon the great Dictionary, which appeared in 1828. The other is Lindley Murray's English Grammar, which was published in York, England, in 1795. Murray was born in this country, and lived here till 1784, when he went to England, and it was there that his literary work was done. His English Grammar was used in all schools in England and the United States for a number of years, and has therefore had an incalculable effect upon the use of the English language.

Such a period as that which we are now studying would be sure to develop oratory. During the Revolution and the times just preceding, James Otis, Samuel Adams, and John Adams were preëminent orators in Massachusetts, and Patrick Henry in Virginia. Probably the last named has left the most effective specimen of political oratory that remains from this period. Some of his sentences, such as "If that be treason, make the most of it," "Give me liberty or give me death," have become household words. In the latter part of the period the most distinguished political orator was Fisher Ames; whom Mr. E. P. Whipple calls a "razeed Edmund Burke." We have a brilliant example of the forensic orator in William Wirt, who was born in Maryland, and lived in that state, and in Virginia and the District of Columbia. His most famous address was the argument in the trial of Aaron Burr.

Webster's
Dictionary,
1828.

Murray's
Grammar,
1795.

Oratory.

Patrick
Henry,
1736-1799.

Fisher Ames,
1758-1808.

William
Wirt,
1772-1834.

As an example of the oratory of the time, study a brief extract from an address by Fisher Ames on the character of Washington.

It is indeed almost as difficult to draw his character as the portrait of virtue. The reasons are similar; our ideas of moral excellence are obscure, because they are complex, and we are obliged to resort to illustrations. Washington's example is the happiest to show what virtue is; and to delineate his character we naturally expatiate on the beauty of virtue; much must be felt and much imagined. His pre-eminence is not so much to be seen in the display of any one virtue as in the possession of them all, and in the practice of the most difficult. Hereafter, therefore, his character must be studied before it will be striking; and then it will be admitted as a model, a precious one to a free republic.

It is no less difficult to speak of his talents. They were adapted to lead, without dazzling, mankind; and to draw forth and employ the talents of others, without being misled by them. In this he was certainly superior, that he neither mistook nor misapplied his own. His great modesty and reserve would have concealed them, if great occasions had not called them forth; and then, as he never spoke from the affectation to shine, nor acted from any sinister motives, it is from their effects only that we are to judge of their greatness and extent. In public trusts, where men, acting conspicuously, are cautious, and in those private concerns where few conceal or resist their weaknesses, Washington was uniformly great, pursuing right conduct from right maxims. His talents were such as assist a sound judgment, and ripen with it. His prudence was consummate, and seemed to take the direction of his powers and passions; for as a soldier, he was more solicitous to avoid mistakes that might be fatal, than to perform exploits

that are brilliant; and as a statesman, to adhere to just principles; however old, than to pursue novelties; and therefore, in both characters, his qualities were singularly adapted to the interest, and were tried in the greatest perils, of the country.

The most striking characteristic of this passage is the smoothness of the sentences, caused largely by the careful balancing of phrases and clauses. The even, balanced character which he ascribes to Washington is reflected in the even, balanced style of the rhetoric. There is nothing to startle or to arouse and compel attention. But the language is clear, strong, and well chosen for the expression of the thought. There is no use of ornamental or of figurative language. In this respect the style is severe. The use of words shows no special preference for Saxon or for Latin derivatives. The passage cannot be called eloquent, but one can hardly fail to perceive that it is clear and forcible.

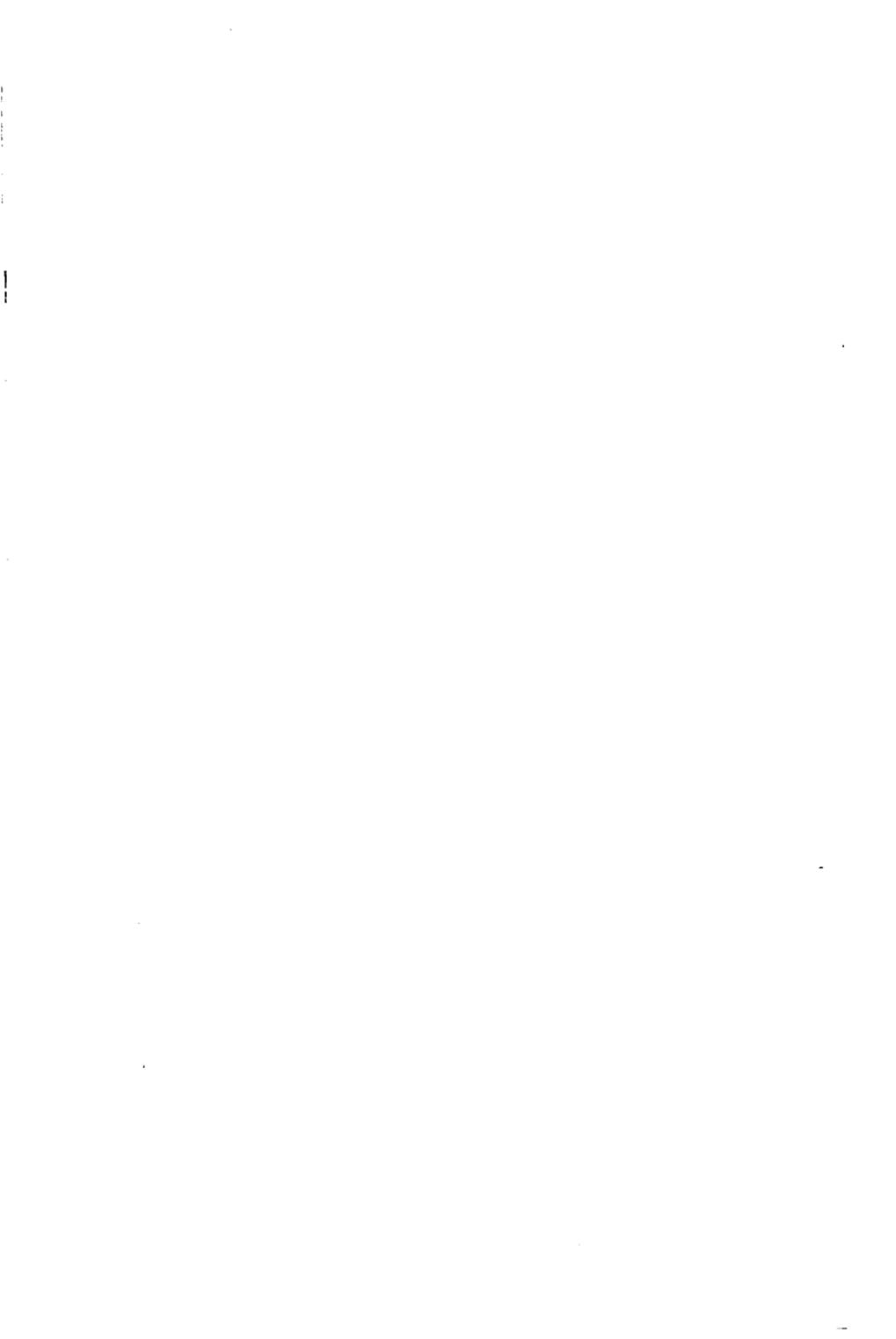
QUESTIONS

What are some of the general characteristics of this period? Give some of the events in the life of John Trumbull. What are some of the general characteristics of "McFingal"? In what kind of verse is it written? Give some instances of "feminine rime." Point out some imperfect rimes. What historical references and allusions in this extract? What were some of the writings in verse of President Dwight? Give some of the chief facts of the life of Joel Barlow. Describe "The Vision of Columbus" and "The Columbiad." What else did Barlow write? What is the point of peculiar interest in Alexander Wilson's poems? To which of the three great divisions of poetry do the examples thus far given belong, and why? Who were some of the earliest lyric

poets? Who was the author of "Hail Columbia"? Give some account of Philip Freneau as a lyric poet. Criticise the "Wild Honeysuckle." Mention some of the best lines, and explain why they are more pleasing than others. Who are our two earliest dramatic writers in this period? Name some of the earliest writers of history and biography. Where was Benjamin Franklin born, and what was his earliest occupation? In what city did he spend the greater part of his life? Give some account of his services to science and education. What were his chief political achievements? What was "Poor Richard"? What are some of the striking qualities of the style of the first extract from the "Autobiography"? What does the second extract reveal as to his methods of study? How does the extract from Woolman compare with that from Franklin? Give some account of our first novelist. What are the names of some of his books? What are the three main elements of construction in the selection from Brown? What two great political documents of this period; and who were their authors? What is Jefferson's great gift to education? Give some account of the works of Thomas Paine. What was "The Federalist"? Who were its authors? Criticise the extract as exposition. Mention other writers in this class. What two famous school books of this period? Mention some of the distinguished orators. Criticise the extract from Fisher Ames.

PART TWO

**PERIOD OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH
CENTURY, 1800-1850**





Yours truly,
F. F. Greene Halleck

CHAPTER III

PERIOD OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1800-1850

VERSE

THE time of experiment is over. The nation is made. The Constitution has been adopted. The place of the United States among the other nations of the world has been made good. Years of peace and comparative commercial prosperity make possible the devotion of lives to literary work. The interminable theological disquisitions of the colonial period are not repeated now; but vigorous theological discussion and strong practical religious thinking find expression in Literature of a high type. The political thought of the time is directed to questions of practical government. The national mind is gaining repose and dignity. There is a consciousness of growing strength, combined with the uneasiness due to the newness of our national existence. The bird of freedom sometimes soared very high and the rooster of Democracy sometimes crowed very loudly. The faults so severely satirized by Dickens in the "American Notes" and in "Martin Chuzzlewit" were unquestionably conspicuous in the life of the time; and we find them noted and rebuked by

some of our own writers. But, on the other hand, the national virtues of enterprise, energy, and generosity are equally evident. The great question of slavery already troubled the minds of public men; but the effort on all hands was to keep it out of national politics. The discussions as to compromise measures on this topic, and as to the relation of the state governments to the national government, and the closely connected questions of tariff, currency, and internal improvements, developed a group of political orators of unparalleled brilliancy. There is a dawning interest in scientific study; and the observations of scientific workers are recorded during the period, in two instances, by writers of genius. Our notable line of historians has its beginning in this period. Also we have a group of real novelists; writers whose books are of interest for their own sakes. We find now a considerable class of men devoting their whole time to literary pursuits; and therefore we can say that there are now American men of letters. Poets, in considerable numbers, write with real music and with true imagination; and in two instances touch a very high note in the poetic scale.

Epic Verse.

Richard
Henry Dana,
1787-1879.

Of the poets of this period the first name that we consider is that of Richard Henry Dana. He was one of a notable family, four generations of which gained distinction in American public life. Like most of the writers of the previous period, Dana was first a man of affairs—a distinguished lawyer—and secondarily a literary man. He was

associated with the founding and early history of the "North American Review," and some of his first writings appeared in that journal. He published essays on critical topics — being one of the first to recognize the genius of Wordsworth — and two novels. His verse, however, is his most important contribution to Literature. It is good, but not great. It is verse of the kind that the critics praise, but the general public does not read. He published a volume of "Poems" in 1827; "Poems and Prose Writings" in 1833; "The Buccaneer, and Other Poems" in 1844. "The Buccaneer" is written with spirit and in strong and correct verse; but it has not held the attention of the public, and it fails in the musical quality of the best poetry.

Joseph Rodman Drake is one of the most interesting personalities in our early Literature. He cannot be called a great poet; but he had the poet's feeling for musical sound and for the beauty of nature, and he had a delicate gift of expression. Moreover, he loved Literature. He and his friend Halleck were lovers of Burns and Campbell, and their poetry shows the influence of these poets. But there is an original strain of music in both of them. Drake's best-known pieces are the "American Flag" and "The Culprit Fay." The last is our first important narrative poem. There is a story that some one in conversation with Drake asserted the impossibility of writing a readable composition on a supernatural or fairy topic, without introducing human characters, and that the poem was written partly for the purpose of proving the contrary.

Joseph
Rodman
Drake,
born in New
York, 1795;
died, 1820.

The offence of the culprit Fay is that he has loved a mortal maiden; but the mortal never appears on the scene. The poem is a graceful, tender, fanciful story in verse. It gives beautiful pictures of the scenery of the Hudson Highlands. It well deserves all the popularity it ever received. It is possible that Drake might not have written anything better if he had lived longer; but as he was only twenty-two years old when this was published, one cannot help feeling that later years might have given us greater things, and that American Literature suffered a severe loss in his early death.

THE CULPRIT FAY. OPENING LINES

- 'Tis the middle watch of a summer's night —
 The earth is dark, but the heavens are bright;

 Naught is seen in the vault on high
 But the moon, and the stars, and the cloudless sky,

 5 And the flood which rolls its milky hue,
 A river of light on the welkin blue.

 The moon looks down on old Cronest,
 She mellows the shades on his shaggy breast,

 10 And seems his huge gray form to throw
 In a silver cone on the wave below;

 His sides are broken by spots of shade,
 By the walnut bough and the cedar made,

 And through their clustering branches dark
 Glimmers and dies the fire-fly's spark —

 15 Like starry twinkles that momently break,
 Through the rifts of the gathering tempest's rack.

These lines are meant to place the reader in the scene of the poem,—the Highlands of the Hudson

on a moonlight night. Cronest is one of the best-known mountains of the region. Some characteristic features of that scenery are introduced,—as the walnut and cedar trees and the fire-flies. The measure is the rimed iambic tetrameter. But notice how variety of effect and lightness are gained by the frequent introduction of other feet, as in lines 8, 10, 14. In lines 8 and 10, anapests are introduced which give a peculiar tripping effect to the measure; and in line 14 a trochee at the beginning emphasizes the glimmer of the fire-fly.

In connection with his friend Halleck, Drake was interested in a series of satirical poems, called "The Croakers," which were published in New York in 1819, and afterwards. This literary and personal friendship continued as long as Drake lived, and is embalmed in a little poem of Halleck's, one stanza of which is among the perfect lyrics of our Literature:

Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of my better days;
None knew thee but to love thee,
None named thee but to praise.

Fitz-Greene
Halleck,
born in
Connecticut,
1790;
died, 1867.

Fitz-Greene Halleck spent almost all his active life in New York. His longest poem was a satire on New York society, called "Fanny." But probably his best work is in the lyrical vein. "Marco Bozzaris" has been a favorite piece for school declamations. It is a spirited Ode, and has the qualities of vigorous life and musical movement. The American people were at this time intensely interested in the Greek Revolution; as is illustrated by the publication, nearly

at the same date as the issue of Halleck's poem, of a Historical Sketch of the Greek Revolution by Dr. S. G. Howe. Halleck, therefore, cannot be accused of seeking a foreign subject when he celebrated the Greek hero. The passage in this poem describing Death in its various aspects has been praised as among the very finest of its kind; and the Ode closes with lines that cling to the memory:

For thou art Freedom's now, and Fame's;
One of the few, the immortal names,
That were not born to die.

Some of the most perfect lines of Halleck's verse are found in the poem on Burns, which is a generous acknowledgment of what our earliest imaginative poets owed to the great Scotch Bard.

BURNS. SELECTED STANZAS

There have been loftier themes than his,
And longer scrolls, and louder lyres,
And lays lit up with Poesy's
Purer and holier fires;

5 Yet read the names that know not death;
Few nobler ones than Burns are there;
And few have won a greener wreath
Than that which binds his hair.

10 His is that language of the heart,
In which the answering heart would speak,
Thought, word, that bids the warm tear start,
Or the smile light the cheek;

15 And his that music, to whose tone
The common pulse of man keeps time,
In cot or castle's mirth or moan,
In cold or sunny clime.



- What sweet tears dim the eye unshed,
 What wild vows falter on the tongue,
 When "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,"
 20 Or "Auld Lang Syne" is sung !
- Pure hopes, that lift the soul above,
 Come with his "Cotter's" hymn of praise,
 And dreams of youth, and truth, and love,
 With "Logan's" banks and braes.
- 25 And when he breathes his master-lay
 Of Alloway's witch-haunted wall,
 All passions in our frames of clay
 Come thronging at his call.
- Imagination's world of air,
 30 And our own world, its gloom and glee,
 Wit, pathos, poetry are there,
 And death's sublimity.

This is simple verse and the better fitted by its simplicity to its theme. Notice how the shorter fourth line is made to carry the culminating thought of each quatrain. Notice how easily, because skilfully, the references to Burns' most famous and familiar poems are introduced (see lines 19, 20, 22, 24, 26), and how well the test of all great poetry is given in lines 13 and 14:

And his that music, to whose tone
 The common pulse of man keeps time.

We have not yet found the American poet of whom this could be truly said. It is not true of Halleck; it is not true of Drake. It is true of very few, and those of whom it is true are the great poets.

Charles Sprague published poems, some of which express warm, true feeling in smooth and graceful verse. He was a man of business whose literary

Charles
Sprague,
born in
Massachu-
sets, 1791;
died, 1828.

work was a recreation. He wrote a good deal of what is known as "occasional" verse; that is, verse written for special occasions — holidays, reunions, political, social, and religious gatherings. The laureates of England have been called upon to compose a great deal of this sort of poetry. In some instances, as in Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington," and, in our own Literature, in the case of Lowell's "Commemoration Ode" and Holmes' "Class Poems," very beautiful poetry has thus been written to order; but it is likely to lack force and spontaneity.

Another writer who composed many much admired occasional poems, especially for private occasions, was Mrs. Lydia Huntley Sigourney. She was for many years one of the most popular American authors. Ballads and elegies and songs and descriptive pieces flowed easily from her pen. They are of a very uniform merit; but there is no one that has made any specially strong impression, or is remembered now.

Another graceful versifier of this period is Mrs. Frances Sargent Osgood. She is spoken of by some critics as the first American woman to write good verse. Whether this is true or not, she wrote much, and acceptably to the critics and the public of her time. But the same comparative oblivion has overtaken her, as has hidden from the thoughts of this generation so many who were famous in their day. Mrs. Osgood published several volumes of poetry in this country and in England, and a complete edition of her poems was issued in New York in 1850.

Lydia
Huntley
Sigourney,
born in
Connecticut,
1791;
died, 1865.

Frances
Sargent
Osgood,
born in
Massachusetts, 1811;
died, 1850.

John Pierpont, a native of Connecticut and a graduate of Yale, was a preacher and reformer who wrote good verses. He published, in 1840, "Airs of Palestine, and Other Poems." He was an antislavery man, and also actively interested in the temperance movement. His best-known poem is a spirited lyric, called "Warren's Address to his Men," and beginning with the line "Stand! The ground's your own, my braves."

James Gates Percival is another native of Connecticut and graduate of Yale College who gained distinction in Literature during this period. He was a man of varied accomplishments and abilities; a physician and student of science as well as a poet. He was a remarkable linguist, knowing ten languages, and was employed in philological work upon Webster's Dictionary. He wrote dramatic and lyric poetry, published a collection of poems in 1826, "The Dream of a Day" in 1843, besides scientific articles, translations, and essays. A complete collection of his poems was published in Boston in 1859. Percival wrote smooth and pretty verses. He is fluent, but cold and unimaginative. There is no fire nor passion in his work. It has never gained the attention of the people; but it has been admired by many, and with justice, for the fineness and delicacy of its style. A good example is the following:

John
Pierpont,
born in
Connecticut,
1785;
died, 1866.

James Gates
Percival,
born in
Connecticut,
1795;
died in
Wisconsin,
1856.

TO SENECA LAKE

On thy fair bosom, silver lake,
The wild swan spreads his snowy sail,
And round his breast the ripples break,
As down he bears before the gale.

- 5 On thy fair bosom, waveless stream,
 The dipping paddle echoes far,
 And flashes in the moonlight gleam,
 And bright reflects the polar star.
- 10 The waves along thy pebbly shore,
 As blows the north wind, heave their foam,
 And curl around the dashing oar,
 As late the boatman hies him home.
- 15 How sweet, at set of sun, to view
 Thy golden mirror spreading wide,
 And see the mist of mantling blue
 Float round the distant mountain's side.
- 20 At midnight hour, as shines the moon,
 A sheet of silver spreads below,
 And swift she cuts, at highest noon,
 Light clouds, like wreaths of purest snow.
- On thy fair bosom, silver lake!
 O, I could ever sweep the oar,
 When early birds at morning wake,
 And evening tells us toil is o'er.

The general effect of this descriptive piece is very pleasing. It is smooth as the placid surface of the lake it describes. It is cool as the moonlight gleam or the sunset and early morning effects it paints. Notice the perfect evenness of lines and the regularity of the iambic feet. Beginning rime, or alliteration, is frequently used. See lines 2, 3, 13, 15, 24. There are some examples, also, of that more difficult and delicate kind of alliteration in which the alliterating consonants are hidden within the words rather than displayed at the beginning. See, for examples of this, lines 6, 7, the *r*'s in line 8, the *st* combination in line 19, and others. Percival was a

student and scholar, in poetry, as in other lines, rather than a creative poet. He experiments in various forms of metre; and among others, not unsuccessfully with the sonnet. I give an example of his work in this kind of verse.

SONNET

- If on the clustering curls of thy dark hair,
 And the pure arching of thy polished brow,
 We only gaze, we fondly dream that thou
 Art one of those bright ministers who bear,
 5 Along the cloudless bosom of the air,
 Sweet, solemn words, to which our spirits bow,
 With such a holy smile thou lookest now,
 And art so soft and delicately fair.
- A veil of tender light is mantling o'er thee ;
 10 Around thy opening lips young loves are playing ;
 And crowds of youths, in passionate thought delaying,
 Pause as thou movest by them to adore thee ;
 By many a sudden blush and tear betraying
 How the heart trembles when it bends before thee.

Notice the careful accuracy of form with which this is written. We find the same characteristics as in the other selection. Notice the hidden alliteration of the liquid *l*'s in lines 5 and 7; and the assonance of the *o* and *u* sounds in lines 5 and 6. These two are very perfect lines in form and in thought. There is a clearly marked advance in the thought at the opening of the sestet, and a rather unusual, but very effective, change to double or feminine rimes in that part of the sonnet.

Nathaniel Parker Willis wrote graceful verses, and had considerable popularity in his versified render-

Nathaniel
Parker
Willis, born
in Maine,
1806; died,
1867.

ings of Bible stories. It was of these that Lowell wrote in the "Fable for Critics":

He'd better let Scripture alone, 'tis self-slaughter,
For nobody likes inspiration and water;

which is a witty expression of the delusion which critics share with many others, that nobody likes what they do not like. Many people did like these poems greatly; and it seems to some that in "Jephthah's Daughter," and in "Absalom," Willis told the beautiful old Scripture stories, with a real feeling of their infinite pathos, and in appropriate and dignified form. Willis will be spoken of again with reference to his prose work.

A few names of verse-writers remain for very brief mention. George Pope Morris wrote many popular songs, of which "Woodman, Spare that Tree" is one of the better known. Richard Henry Wilde, a very accomplished statesman and scholar, of Georgia, and afterwards of Louisiana, is remembered by some for the sake of a beautiful little lyric which was published without his authority in 1815, and which has been repeatedly reprinted. It opens with the line, "My life is like the summer rose." A curious incident connected with this poem is the fact that a friend of Mr. Wilde translated it into Greek for his own amusement, and this Greek version somehow got into print, and was mistaken for an ode of Alcæus. Mr. Wilde was then accused of having published as original a translation from the Greek. John Howard Payne wrote and published a large number of plays. All these have been forgotten. But a simple little

George Pope
Morris,
1802-1864.

R. H. Wilde,
1789-1847.

John
Howard
Payne,
born in New
York, 1791;
died in
Tunis,
Africa, 1852.

song, written for one of those plays, will never be forgotten, and has made Payne's name immortal; for "Home, Sweet Home" touched the hearts of the common people. What Halleck wrote about Burns,

And his that music, to whose tone
The common pulse of man keeps time,

is true of this song, and so it takes its place among the great poems, simple and slight as it is.

The same is true, to a less degree, in regard to "The Old Oaken Bucket," by Samuel Woodworth. He was a literary man all his life, edited various papers and journals, published numberless articles, wrote historical and dramatic works, fiction, and poetry; but all have been forgotten except this one little song. Yet another "single famous" poem of this period is the "Carmen Bellicosum" of Guy Humphreys McMaster, a spirited description of the Revolutionary soldier, beginning,

Samuel
Woodworth,
1785-1842.

G. H.
McMaster,
1829-1887.

In their ragged regimentals
Stood the old Continentals.

Washington Allston is considered by many to be the greatest painter in the early history of American art. He was a man of fine literary taste, and of some power of expression. He has left poems and essays and a romance. But he is to be remembered as an artist rather than as a poet. He published, in 1813, "The Sylphs of the Seasons"; and in 1850 a volume of "Lectures on Art, and Poems" appeared.

Washington
Allston,
born in
South
Carolina,
1779; died
in Massachu-
setts, 1850.

In Dramatic verse there is very little of interest during this period. It has been remarked that John Howard Payne wrote a number of plays which have for the most part been forgotten. "Home, Sweet Home" was originally sung in an operatic play called "Clari, the Maid of Milan." In Stedman and Hutchinson's Library of American Literature will also be found extracts from "The Lancers, an Interlude"; and "Brutus, or the Fall of Tarquin, a Tragedy." The latter is written in blank verse, and seems to show some ease in the management of that form of metre. There is a fragment of an attempt at Dramatic verse in the thin volume of poems by Edgar Allan Poe, called "Scenes from 'Politian,' an unpublished Drama." The Library of American Literature has also preserved for us a scene from "Metamora, a Tragedy," by John Augustus Stone. This was presented in New York, with Edwin Forrest in the title role; but it has never been published. It is interesting for the fact that the subject is distinctively American. It is written partly in blank verse and partly in prose.

QUESTIONS

What is the Period of "The Early Nineteenth Century"? What are some of its general characteristics? What types of Literature show advance upon the previous period? Give some account of the writings of Richard Henry Dana. When and where was Joseph Rodman Drake born? What are some of his characteristics? In what verse is "The Culprit Fay" written? What are some of its excellences as a narrative poem? How does the extract given show original observation of nature? How does the measure accord with the thought? Give some

account of the life and writings of Fitz-Greene Halleck. How does the form of the stanzas in the extract assist the expression of the thought? What references are there to Burns' poems? What lines state a test of great poetry? What special kind of verse is found frequently in the writings of Charles Sprague and Lydia Huntley Sigourney? Give some account of the writings of Frances Sargent Osgood and John Pierpont. Give a general account of the writings of James Gates Percival. What is the general effect of the poem on "Seneca Lake"? Point out the use of alliteration in this poem. Analyze the structure of Percival's Sonnet, showing the advance of thought at the beginning of the sestet. Show the use of vowel sounds in this sonnet. What was the character of the verse of Nathaniel Parker Willis? Mention other lyric poets of the period. Who were the authors of "Home, Sweet Home," "The Old Oaken Bucket," and "Carmen Bellicosum"? What were some of the writings of Washington Allston? Give some account of the dramatic writings of John Howard Payne. What other dramatic writings were there during this period?

CHAPTER IV

PERIOD OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1800-1850

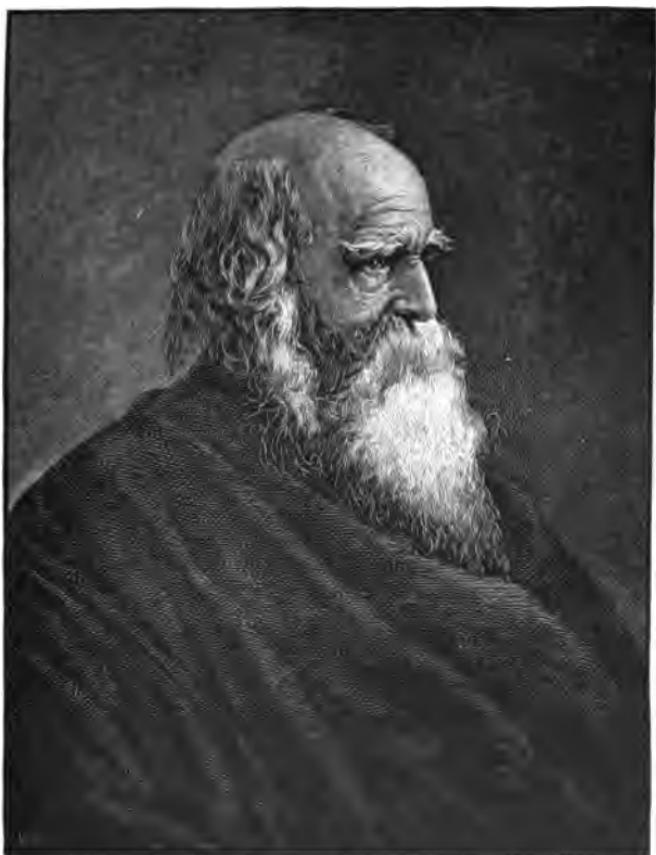
VERSE CONTINUED—BRYANT AND POE

William
Cullen
Bryant,
born in
Massachu-
sets, 1794;
died in New
York, 1878.

IT was said in the introductory remarks as to the writers of this period that there were two who reached a very high note in the poetic scale. To these two we now turn our attention. They were contrasted at every point, in character, career, and genius; and the study of the contrast will be helpful to the comprehension and appreciation of both.

William Cullen Bryant was born in Cummington, Berkshire County, Massachusetts, November 3, 1794. He was a frail child, with an abnormally large head, which his father, a physician with a turn for experiment, tried to reduce by dipping the baby every morning into a spring of cold water. It is not surprising, perhaps, that a child who could survive this should become a man who lived with generally good health to the ripe age of eighty-four years.

In his sixteenth year Bryant entered Williams College. He did not complete the course, but withdrew and began to study law. He had, like most intelligent boys, written some verses, which were not very different from the usual efforts of such youths. But, in his eighteenth year, he wrote the poem which is still his chief claim to distinction. "Thanatopsis" is



William Cullen Bryant



probably the most remarkable instance of precocity on record. It seems rather a pity, however, that it should be so considered. For it is a great poem, aside from any reference to the time of its composition. It was published in the "North American Review" in September, 1817. There have been a good many dates suggested for the birth of American poetry. Probably no one will ever be agreed upon; for poetry is not born at any one place at any one time, any more than violets. Some morning in the spring we wake up and the violets are here; but it would not be easy to tell on what day and in what place the first violet bloomed. So the American people woke up about that time and found that real poetry was being written. Though we cannot certainly call this the birthday of American poetry, it is a good date to remember. That September, 1817, issue of the "North American Review" marks a very important epoch in our Literature; for it contained the two poems by Bryant which were first published, "Thanatopsis" and "The Inscription for the Entrance to a Wood." In 1825 Bryant went to New York, and for a while was connected with a series of unsuccessful magazines. In his thirty-second year he became connected with the New York "Evening Post," and thus began his life work. For fifty years his was one of the influential pens in the country. Perhaps we should have had more poetry if Bryant had not been so successful a journalist. But it is more probable that the real poetry in a man's soul will express itself, whatever his circumstances;

"Thanatopsis," 1817.

and what we should have gained in quantity we might have lost in quality had Bryant written more. His personality was, if possible, even more influential than his pen. For many years Bryant might well have been called New York's chief citizen. He was prominent on many social and ceremonial occasions. His venerable head, with its abundant snow-white beard, was often conspicuous and always honored. It was just after delivering an address at the dedication of a monument to the Italian patriot and reformer Mazzini that he fell on the steps of a friend's house and received injuries from the effects of which, on June 12, 1878, he died.

It cannot be said that there is any marked development in Bryant's poetry. He struck a high note at the beginning, and he sustained it to the end. The verse of the boy of eighteen and that of the man of eighty show substantially the same characteristics. We wish there were more of it. Considering the length of his life and the greatness of his mind and character, the product is sadly small. It is for the most part "meditative." He loves nature in her moods of quiet, and interprets her teaching. The opening lines of "Thanatopsis"—

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks
A various language,

characterize him, except that it might be said his interpretation of nature lacks variety. Bryant is without passion. There is feeling in his work; but the feeling is calm and subdued. He teaches a high

ideal of living and a serene trust. His diction and his thought are alike pure. Like all great poets, he is profoundly religious; but it is the religion of confidence and peace, rather than of question, struggle, or consecration. His mastery of form is very perfect. He has taken two of the most difficult of English forms, blank verse and the Spenserian stanza, and has handled them with consummate skill. We shall find no better examples for the study of these forms in our Literature. "Thanatopsis" was written in blank verse; and when in his old age he made a translation of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" into English, he used the same form. I will call attention to some of the special excellences of his first great poem.

THANATOPSIS

- To him who [in the love of Nature holds
 Communion with her visible forms,] she speaks
 A various language; [for his gayer hours
 She has a voice of gladness, and a smile
 5 And eloquence of beauty,] and she glides
 Into his darker musings, [with a mild
 And healing sympathy, that steals away
 Their sharpness, ere he is aware.] When thoughts
 Of the last bitter hour come like a blight
 10 Over thy spirit, and sad images
 Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,
 And breathless darkness, and the narrow house,
 Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart—
 Go forth, under the open sky, and list
 15 To Nature's teachings, while from all around—
 Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—
 Comes a still voice— Yet a few days, and thee
 The all-beholding sun shall see no more

- In all his course ; nor yet in the cold ground,
20 Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears,
Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist
Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again,
And, lost each human trace, surrendering up
25 Thine individual being, shalt thou go
To mix forever with the elements,
To be a brother to the insensible rock
And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak
30 Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mould.
Yet not to thine eternal resting-place
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish
Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
With patriarchs of the infant world — with kings,
35 The powerful of the earth — the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past,
All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills
Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun — the vales
Stretching in pensive quietness between ;
40 The venerable woods — rivers that move
In majesty, and the complaining brooks
That make the meadows green ; and, poured round all,
Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
Are but the solemn decorations all
45 Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
Are shining on the sad abodes of death,
Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
The globe are but a handful to the tribes
50 That slumber in its bosom.— Take the wings
Of morning, traverse Barca's desert sands,
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound,
Save his own dashings — yet — the dead are there :
55 And millions in those solitudes, since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep — the dead reign there alone.
So shalt thou rest, and what if thou withdraw

- In silence from the living, and no friend
60 Take note of thy departure ? All that breathe
Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh
When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care
Plod on, and each one as before will chase
His favorite phantom ; yet all these shall leave
65 Their mirth and their employments, and shall come,
And make their bed with thee. As the long train
Of ages glide away, the sons of men,
The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes
In the full strength of years, matron, and maid,
70 And the sweet babe, and the gray-headed man,—
Shall one by one be gathered to thy side,
By those, who in their turn shall follow them.

- So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, which moves
75 To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
80 Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

The thought of the poem is very simple. The contemplation of death in the light of nature reveals two facts: all have died; therefore all shall die. In death we join a great multitude, and we shall be followed by multitudes. We should, therefore, meet the universal lot with fortitude and dignity. It may seem a simple lesson, but it is all that nature teaches us. The subject and its method of treatment place this poem in the class of "Elegiac" verse. It reminds us, in the general pensive tone, of Gray's "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard." This serious, quiet contemplation of the sad facts of sorrow and death is one of

the characteristic features of the English poetry of the time just before Bryant; and it is of interest to see it appearing in this, perhaps the first important contribution of America to English poetry. The excellence of the poem lies in the appropriate and beautiful development of these simple thoughts. Such lines as these lift the reader out of the region of the commonplace into that of the imagination:

The hills

Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun. Lines 37-38.

Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste. Line 43.

Through the still lapse of ages. Line 48.

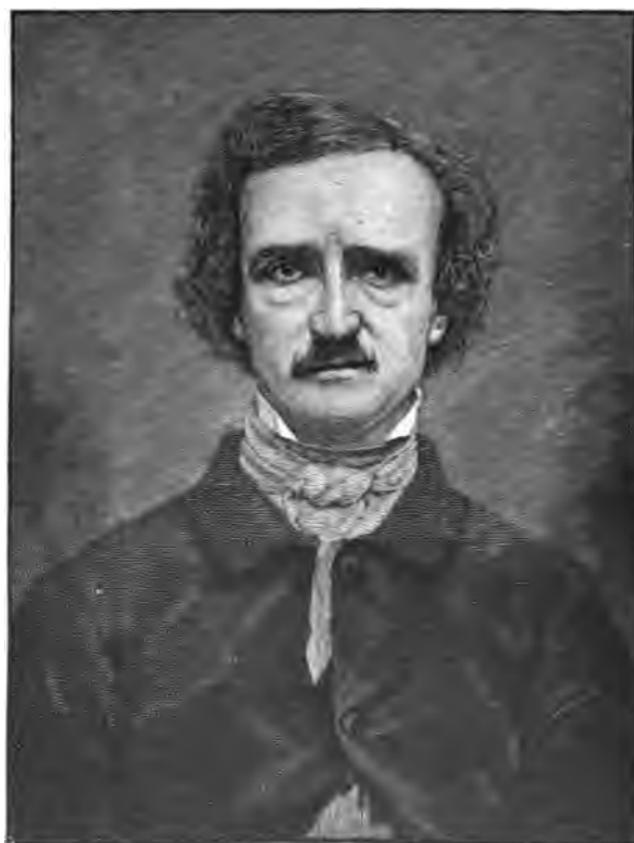
Notice how the special aspect of hills and ocean appropriate to the thought of the poem is impressed upon us; and how, in line 48, the swift and unnoticed passage of time is expressed in the very sound of the letters. It is remarkable how the thought is carried back to the beginning of the race, over all the world, and forward into the future. This is accomplished by the use of suggestive phrases, such as: "Barca's desert sands," line 51; "Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound," line 53; "As the long train of ages glide away," lines 66-67. A notable characteristic is the self-control, the reserve, shown throughout the poem. The point is never pressed too hard. The temptation to expand is always successfully resisted. It is the lack of this quality of reserve which makes Barlow's verse so tedious. The true poet would always rather suggest than describe; and he will always stop when the impression he desires is made.

The poem, as has been said, is in blank verse; and as Bryant is probably our greatest master in that form, it will be well to examine the versification carefully. The first eight lines scanned will serve as an example of the whole. I mark the accented syllables with the acute accent; and in cases where the stress is divided between the two syllables of the foot, use the grave accent, leaving the unaccented syllables unmarked. The curved line marks the cesura, or point, in each line where the sense calls for a pause. The right management of the cesura, so that the sense pause shall correspond to the rhythmical pause, is very difficult in verse. If the pause occurs at the same point in each line, the effect will be unpleasantly monotonous, or sing-song. On the other hand, if the pauses are too far apart, the reader has to take breath in the middle of the line, and that will sometimes spoil the musical effect. In this, as in all good verse, the rhetorical pauses come where they give variety and beauty to the rhythm. With very few exceptions each foot is a perfect iambus. The exceptions, however, are frequent enough to avoid the monotony which absolute uniformity would cause. The word "visible" in the second line occasions one exception. Here, in order to make an iambus, the syllables must be crowded together, or the second syllable slurred. It is probably better to give each syllable its full value, making with the following word, "forms," an anapest. The same is true of the word "various" in the third line. So the first word of the sixth line forms a trochee, the

stress coming upon the first syllable. Such a change not only gives variety, but emphasizes the change of thought which comes at that point of the poem.

There are some beautiful examples of assonance in "Thanatopsis." Notice the effect of the vowel sounds in lines 14, 18, 36, 53-54. In the last-mentioned especially see how the open *o* sounds suggest the rolling of the broad river, and the close *a* and *e* sounds the dashings of its rapids. Line 54 is also characterized by alliteration, which, though not very prominent in this poem, and certainly not obtrusive, is yet very skilfully and effectively employed. Notice how the consonant sounds are repeated in lines 31, 48, and 78.

In some cases, perhaps in many, these finer effects of assonance and alliteration are due to the instinctive choice of words, resulting from the poet's musical ear, rather than to conscious selection. Yet many of our great poets have spent hours over a single line in order to make the sound and sense more perfectly harmonize. It is interesting and instructive in this relation to notice the changes which Bryant made in "Thanatopsis" in successive editions. Thus the line already cited, "Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste," was not in the first edition. In line 31 "thy" was changed to "thine," probably to avoid the unpleasant combination of vowels, "thy eternal." Lines 50-51 were worked over several times. "Pierce the Barcan wilderness," "The Barcan desert pierce," "Traverse Barca's desert sands," are the varying forms which show how the poet labored



Edgar A. Poe

over that little phrase. Again, line 53 reads in the first edition, "That veil the Oregon where he hears no sound." Clearly the poet was thinking of the sound of the vowels as well as the meaning when he changed this line to, "Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound." Line 70 is given as it is found in the little blue and gold edition of 1862, "And the sweet babe and the gray-headed man." In the edition of 1821 this, with the preceding line, ran thus:

The bowed with age, the infant in the smile
And beauty of its innocent age cut off.

In the complete edition of 1883, representing, we may suppose, the author's latest thought about the lines, they read:

In the full strength of years, matron and maid,
The speechless babe and the gray-headed man.

As originally published in the "North American Review," the poem began with the words, "Yet a few days," in line 17, and closed with line 66, "And make their bed with thee." The introduction and the close were written for the edition of 1821.

There could scarcely be imagined a life more entirely contrasted to Bryant's than that of Edgar Allan Poe. He was the child of David and Elizabeth Arnold Poe, who were at the time of his birth members of the dramatic company of the Federal Street Theatre, Boston. In that city Poe was born, January 19, 1809. Left an orphan in his childhood, he was adopted by Mr. John Allan, a wealthy merchant of Richmond, Virginia. He accompanied his

Edgar Allan
Poe, born
in Boston,
1809; died
in Baltimore,
1849.

adopted parents to England, and was at school for five years at Stoke-Newington. This school he has described in the story "William Wilson." He spent a short time at the University of Virginia, and then for a little while was in Mr. Allan's counting-room in Richmond. He left here "to seek his fortune," and at Boston in 1827 issued his first volume, "Tamerlane, and Other Poems." Thus his poetical career began early, as did Bryant's. But the poems in this volume do not bear the relation to Poe's subsequent work that "Thanatopsis" does to Bryant's. His earnings from his literary work were not large; and probably in a fit of despair he enlisted in the United States army. He did well as a soldier, and was promoted; and Mr. Allan, learning of his whereabouts, secured his appointment to a cadetship at West Point. He was more interested in poetry than in his professional studies, however; neglected his studies, and in 1831 was cashiered. From this time he earned a precarious support by his pen. He was editor of magazines in Richmond, Philadelphia, and New York. He gained distinction as a critical writer, and by his weird and powerful tales. On the 29th of January, 1845, "The Raven" appeared in the New York "Evening Mirror," and from that time Poe was famous. The last years of his life were spent in New York, his home being at Fordham, a suburb of the city. His home relations were happy, in the sense that a tender and faithful affection existed between him and his wife. Her health was always delicate, however, and her death confirmed Poe's tendency to

irregular habits, which were the cause, or at least the occasion, of his own death, in Baltimore, in October, 1849.

The judgments upon Poe's life and work have been varied in the extreme. Lowell wrote in the "Fable for Critics":

There comes Poe with his raven like Barnaby Rudge,
Three-fifths of him genius, and two-fifths sheer fudge.

It is a great deal to say of any one that he is three-fifths genius. It is severe, however, to call the remaining two-fifths sheer fudge. On the other hand, some critics have maintained that Poe is the only original genius in American Literature. All agree in ascribing to him genius, which is the highest praise that can be given to a writer, but probably no two of them would agree exactly in their answers if asked just what they mean by genius. There can be no doubt, however, that in "The Raven," "The Bells," "Ulalume," "The Conquering Worm," "Annabel Lee," "Israfel," and indeed in most of his lyrics, Poe displays a mastery of sound, and a power of expressing feelings of despair, regret, and a wild sort of aspiration, which are of a very high degree, and of a kind all his own. It cannot be said that Poe is like any of the British poets. He is certainly not Wordsworthian, nor Byronic, nor is he like Shelley. He is Poe, and no one else, and like no one else. He is essentially lyrical. He did not believe in the Epic style, maintaining that if a poem or tale exceeded a certain moderate limit of length, its effect

was injured; that the perfect poem must be a short poem. This is, of course, true of the lyrical poem, which appeals strongly to the emotions, and expresses the personality of the writer. Poe is intensely personal. It is his own despair, his own regrets, his own baffled hopes and desires, which inspire his verse. He seems to have little of the dramatic power of conceiving other beings, and expressing their thoughts, feelings, hopes, and characters. His poems interpret his own soul. They do not interpret nature. If we read Bryant's "Thanatopsis" or his "Hymn to Death," and then read Poe's "Conquering Worm," we can hardly fail to feel the contrast in thought and method. Bryant goes to nature for the meaning of death. Poe keeps his eye fixed upon the human being, and upon the body after death; and as he looks no further than the imagination can see, the effect is terrible. The horrors that nature hides from us, Poe drags to the light. Bryant imitates the reserve of the nature he studies. But Poe has what Bryant lacks,—warmth and passion. His lyrics take a grip upon one that cannot easily be unloosed. "The Raven" and "The Bells" have probably been committed to memory and recited more frequently than any other American poems, and this is because of certain very high qualities of excellence. The refrain, which is a prominent characteristic of both, is of course an aid to the memory. But the intensely vivid picturing of the thought, and the perfect adaptation of the sound to the feeling, are the real secrets of the ease of memorizing. Take "The Bells" as an

example of Poe's work, and look for some of the obvious sources of its power.

THE BELLS

I

Hear the sledges with the bells,—
Silver bells !
What a world of merriment their melody foretells!
How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
5 In the icy air of night !
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens, seem to twinkle
With a crystalline delight ;
Keeping time, time, time,
10 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells, bells, bells, bells,
Bells, bells, bells —
From the jingling and the tinkling of the bells.

II

15 Hear the mellow wedding bells,
Golden bells !
What a world of happiness their harmony foretells !
Through the balmy air of night
How they ring out their delight !
20 From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats
To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats
On the moon !
25 Oh, from out the sounding cells,
What a gush of euphony voluminously wells !
How it swells !
How it dwells
On the Future ! How it tells
30 Of the rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing
Of the bells, bells, bells,

35 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells,—
 To the rhyming and the chiming of the bells!

III

- Hear the loud alarum bells,—
 Brazen bells !
- What a tale of terror, now, their turbulency tells !
 In the startled ear of night
- 40 How they scream out their affright !
 Too much horrified to speak,
 They can only shriek, shriek,
 Out of tune,
- In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
 In a mad expostulation with the deaf and frantic fire
- 45 Leaping higher, higher, higher,
 With a desperate desire,
 And a resolute endeavor
 Now — now to sit or never,
- 50 By the side of the pale-faced moon.
 Oh, the bells, bells, bells !
 What a tale their terror tells
 Of Despair !
- 55 How they clang, and clash, and roar !
 What a horror they outpour
 On the bosom of the palpitating air !
 Yet the ear it fully knows,
- 60 By the twanging,
 And the clangling,
 How the danger ebbs and flows :
 Yet the ear distinctly tells,
- 65 In the jangling,
 And the wrangling,
 How the danger sinks and swells,
 By the sinking or the swelling in the anger of the bells —
- Of the bells —
- Of the bells, bells, bells, bells,
 Bells, bells, bells —
- In the clamor and the clangor of the bells !

IV

- 70 Hear the tolling of the bells —
 Iron bells !
 What a world of solemn thought their monody compels !
 In the silence of the night,
 How we shiver with affright,
 75 At the melancholy menace of their tone !
 For every sound that floats
 From the rust within their throats
 Is a groan.
 And the people — ah, the people —
 80 They that dwell up in the steeple,
 All alone,
 And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
 In that muffled monotone,
 Feel a glory in so rolling
 85 On the human heart a stone —
 They are neither man nor woman —
 They are neither brute nor human —
 They are Ghouls :
 90 And their king it is who tolls ;
 And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
 Rolls
 A pæan from the bells !
 And his merry bosom swells
 With the pæan of the bells !
 95 And he dances, and he yells ;
 Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the pæan of the bells —
 Of the bells :
 100 Keeping time, time, time,
 In a sort of Runic rhyme,
 To the throbbing of the bells —
 Of the bells, bells, bells —
 To the sobbing of the bells ;
 105 Keeping time, time, time,
 As he knells, knells, knells,
 In a happy Runic rhyme,

To the rolling of the bells —
 Of the bells, bells, bells —
110 To the tolling of the bells,
 Of the bells, bells, bells, bells —
 Bells, bells, bells —
 To the moaning and the groaning of the bells.

One notices at once the great irregularity of the lines. This is more apparent than real; that is, it is more a matter of printing than of real irregularity of metre. The poem could, without much alteration, be written in lines of six, seven, or eight feet. But the printing in varied lengths adds much to the effect by emphasizing the short phrases which are put into separate lines. Notice lines 90–92 in the fourth stanza. They could be written in one line, thus, —

And he rolls, rolls, rolls, rolls, a pæan from the bells,

which could be scanned as a pentameter line, with anapest, spondee, trochee, dactyl, and iambus. This is certainly a great variety of feet for one line; but the variety is there, whether we make one line or three, and simply illustrates Poe's originality and boldness in the use of metrical forms. The putting the last "rolls" into a line by itself gives it great emphasis. It is really a suggestion to the elocutionist, rather than a metrical arrangement. A good deal of the repetition and line arrangement of "The Bells" deserves the same characterization.

Assonance is a very prominent characteristic of this poem. Each stanza strikes a keynote of sound in the epithet applied to the bells, and the words following are largely variations on that keynote.

Thus the first stanza has "Silver bells," and then follow variations on the *i* sound. The word "tintinnabulation" would have been rejected by most writers as unpoetical; but it fits in perfectly with Poe's scheme of sound, and, as he uses it, seems poetical and beautiful. So the second stanza has "Golden bells," and then rings the changes on the *o* and *u* notes. Notice lines 20-23. The third has "Brazen bells," and follows the *a* and *e* sounds. For examples, see lines 38, 42, 44, 56, 62, 63, 64, 69. The fourth begins with the tolling of the "Iron bells," and then weaves together the sounds that have been prominent in the other three, closing in line 113 with the full round *o* sound.

Alliteration also is very prominent in this poem. There are examples in lines 3, 4, 9, 11, and the student can now easily look it out for himself. Indeed, all through, the frequent repetition of the word "bells" gives the effect of alliteration. We should notice also the skill shown in the management of rimes. Necessarily one rime, that with the word "bells," has to be very often used. But it never seems as if the word selected was forced upon the poet for the sake of the rime. A striking peculiarity of the poem is the frequent and skilful use of feminine, or double rimes, which gives a peculiar swinging, ringing, bell-like quality to the rhythm. But all these elements of form are well subordinated to the thought and feeling expressed by the poem. The "bells" are made the types of hope, love, joy, terror, ambition, sorrow, and despair. And the

sounds, rime, metre, all are made to help the expression of these ideas. The more it is studied, the more wonderful will seem the art with which this is done. Mr. E. C. Stedman says:

In the same remarkable fantasia the bells themselves become human, and it is a master stroke that makes us hear them shriek out of tune,

In a clamorous appealing to the mercy of the fire,
and forces us to the very madness with which they are

Leaping higher, higher, higher,
With a desperate desire,
And a resolute endeavor,
Now — now to sit, or never,
By the side of the pale-faced moon.

QUESTIONS

When and where was William Cullen Bryant born? Give some account of his early life. When and in what journal was "Thanatopsis" first published? What other poem appeared at the same time? When did Bryant go to New York to live? Give some account of his life there. What is the character of the most of Bryant's poetry? What is its type of feeling? What is its character as to form? What is the thought of "Thanatopsis"? To what class of poetry does it belong? Note some verses of special excellence, and point out the qualities in which they excel. What especially suggestive phrases are employed? Analyze the metrical arrangement of the first eight lines. How is the cesura employed? Note some examples of assonance and of alliteration. What changes were made in successive editions of the poem, and what do they indicate as to the poet's method? When and where was Edgar Allan Poe born? Tell the story of his life. When was his first volume of poems published? When did "The Raven" appear? What are some of the critical judgments upon Poe's poetical work? What is the peculiar power of his poetry? What was his theory as to the proper length of a poem? Compare and

contrast his work with that of Bryant. What effect has the irregularity of verse length in "The Bells"? Describe the management of the vowel sounds in this poem. Point out examples of alliteration. What peculiarity is there in the use of rime? What relation have these peculiarities of form to the thought of the poem?

CHAPTER V

PERIOD OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1800-1850

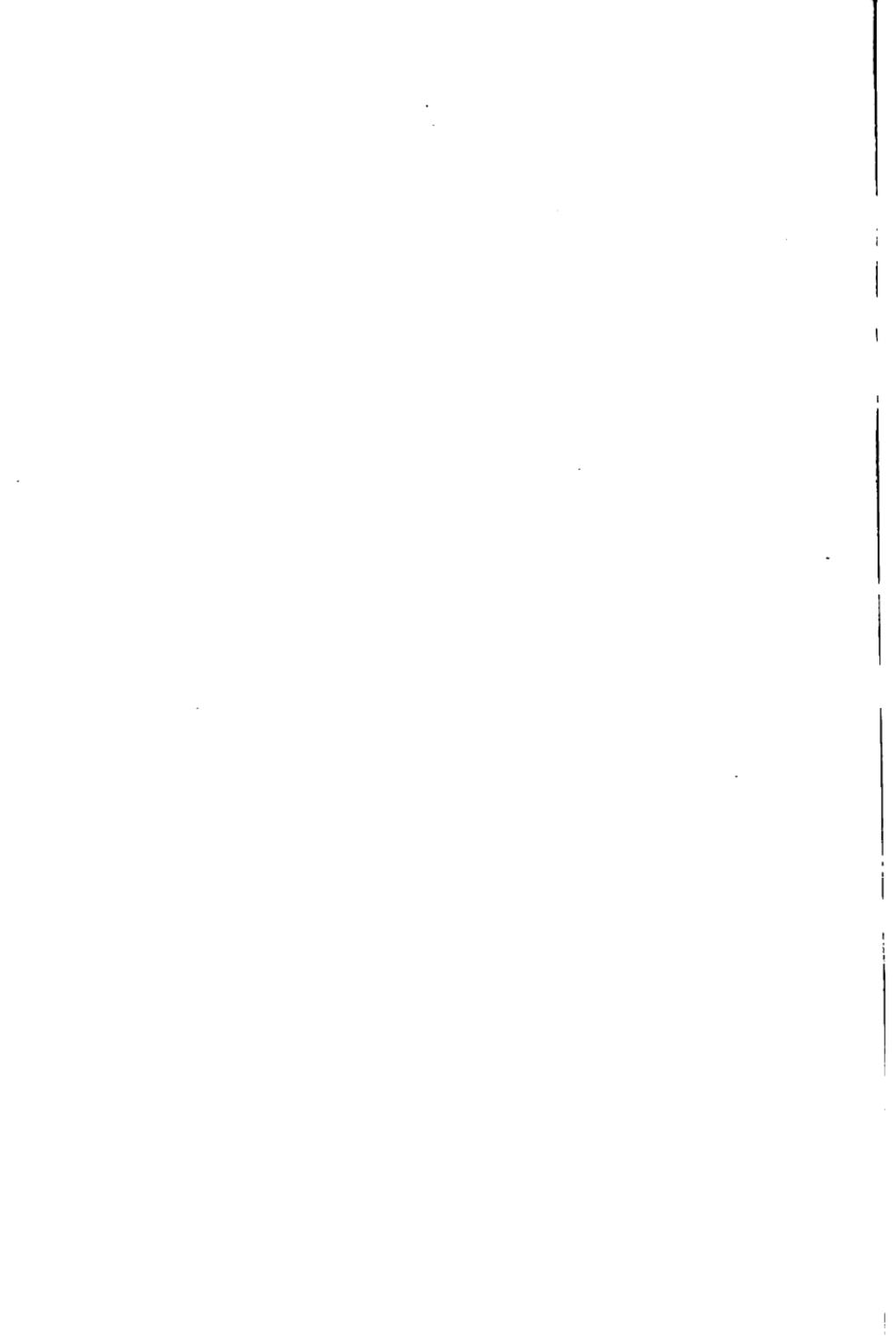
NARRATIVE PROSE. FICTION

Poe was famous as a writer of stories as well as of poems. Some critics have thought that his peculiar genius is displayed even more powerfully in his "Tales" than in his verse. He held to the same theory in prose as in poetry. The long narrative seemed to him necessarily imperfect. The interest, he thought, cannot be sustained beyond a certain point, and, therefore, the perfect tale, like the perfect poem, will be short. Consistently with this theory he never undertook an extended novel or romance, but spent all his labor upon bringing his short stories to the greatest possible perfection. His first literary success was a story, written in 1833 for a money prize of one hundred dollars, offered by the Baltimore "Saturday Visitor." The story was entitled "A Manuscript found in a Bottle," and one of the judges who awarded the prize was Mr. John P. Kennedy, of whom we shall have more to say. Mr. Kennedy proved a very useful friend to Poe, obtaining literary work for him, and securing him the position of editor of "The Southern Literary Messenger." In 1839 Poe published a collection of

Poe's Tales.



J. Fenimore Cooper



his stories, in two volumes, entitled "Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque." He showed great originality in the plots and incidents of these tales. The horrible, in one form or another, is a strong element in most of them. He had the greatest ingenuity in devising incidents and situations. He showed great power of description and of swiftly moving narration. There is very little portrayal or development of character. As in the poems, it is Poe himself who, under various names and in various disguises, appears in all the stories; or else the characters are subordinated to the incidents. Among the most powerful of the tales are "The Fall of the House of Usher," "The Black Cat," "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "William Wilson," "The Gold Bug." Poe's ideas and plots, in these stories, have been freely imitated. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" set the fashion for detective stories which has been followed by a number of clever writers since. "The Gold Bug" did the same for the use of the "cryptogram" in fiction. It would not be easy to count the stories which have borrowed suggestions of one sort or another from Poe. "William Wilson" is to some extent autobiographic, describing the school in England where Poe spent some years; and perhaps its leading idea, of a man tormented and driven wild by his double, suggests the strangely double character of the author. The thought is not entirely dissimilar from that of Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

Poe's tales are essentially romantic. He never attempts to reproduce character, or manners, or life,

in their ordinary or commonplace manifestations. It is always the terrible, the grotesque, or the extraordinary, which gives interest to his plots. His style shows a remarkable power of adapting words to the prevailing tone of the composition. In the opening passage of "The Fall of the House of Usher," for example, the day is described as "dull, dark, and soundless," the building has "bleak walls," "vacant eye-like windows," the lake in front of the house is called "a black and lurid tarn." In this way the tone of gloom and terror is given to the beginning, which is maintained with increasing force till the end, when "The deep and dark tarn at my feet closed suddenly and silently over the fragments of the house of Usher." There is nothing preternatural in this story. Every circumstance may be accounted for. The premature burial is due to catalepsy; and the final destruction of the house to a tornado. But by the skilful management of incident and the powerful descriptions, all the horrible effect of a ghost story is secured, without the often attendant absurdity. For skill in the effective grouping of incidents, for power in description, for the masterful use of words to suggest pictures and secure the condition of mind in the reader which will make him susceptible to the impression desired by the writer, Poe is, probably, the best example in our Literature. His failure is in lack of reserve. He sometimes presses the point too hard. We refuse to believe in such a combination of elements of gloom and horror as he employs in most of his stories. Ethical

teaching and humor are almost entirely absent from his work.

Continuing the study of the prose fiction of this period I note next, the name of William Ware, a Unitarian clergyman who wrote some historical romances of considerable popularity in their time. "Zenobia," "Aurelian," and "Julian" are the names of three of his best books.

William Gilmore Simms was also a writer of romances. His works are of value as illustrating the earlier history of the United States, especially in the Carolinas; and to a certain extent the life and manners of the people of those states. He was a very voluminous writer, publishing a good deal of verse, as well as editorial and historical work, and a long series of works of fiction. "The Yemassee," published in 1835, is thought to be his best work. These romances have spirit and vigor of style, but show the defects of the author's lack of thorough literary training. They will always be of interest, however, as illustrations of the life of the time, and as the only important representative, in the Literature of the period, of the part of the country which was the author's home. Simms' publications number forty-four titles. They include poems, novels, histories, biographies, and critical essays. Some of his more important works, with the dates of their publication, are the following:

Lyrical and Other Poems	1827
Martin Faber	1833
The Yemassee	1835
Life of Francis Marion	1845
The Sword and the Distaff	1852

William
Ware, born
in Massachu-
setts, 1797;
died, 1852.

William
Gilmore
Simms,
born in
South
Carolina,
1806;
died, 1870.

Catharine
Maria
Sedgwick,
born in
Massachusetts, 1789;
died, 1867.

For reasons similar to those which give special value to the writings of Simms, a place in the history of American Literature will always be found for the name of Catharine Maria Sedgwick. She did for Massachusetts what Simms did for Carolina; but she did it more in the style of the novel than of the romance. Perhaps the difference is due somewhat to the nature of the material offered by New England life. But certainly Miss Sedgwick has more of the manner of "realism" than has the Southern author. Her first novels were published anonymously. "Redwood," which appeared in 1824, was reprinted in England, and translated into four European languages. It is said that this book was ascribed to Cooper by some European critics. "The Linwoods, or Sixty Years Since in America," is thought by many to be her best work.

John
Pendleton
Kennedy,
born in
Baltimore,
1795; died,
1870.

Among the most accomplished of the many brilliant men who adorned American public life during this period, was John Pendleton Kennedy. He was prominent in political life, in Congress, and in the diplomatic service. He published writings on political subjects, in biography, and in history. His connection with Poe has been referred to already. He was an intimate friend of the great English novelist, Thackeray; and one of the curiosities of Literature is the fact that a chapter of "The Virginians" was written by Kennedy. It would be an interesting exercise to try to discover, from indications in the material and style, which chapter of Thackeray's novel was written by the Ameri-

can. Kennedy's books might be called "romantic novels," as combining the two types of fiction. They illustrate the life and manners of Virginia and Maryland; but they go back to the Revolutionary and colonial times for their subjects; and in "Rob of the Bowl," for instance, the somewhat stately life of the lords proprietary, with the pirate smugglers of the time, give the book an Old World flavor of romance. This book, published in 1838, "Horse-Shoe Robinson," 1835, and "Swallow Barn," 1832, are Kennedy's principal works of fiction.

James Kirke Paulding is always associated in our minds with Washington Irving, his intimate friend and literary partner in the "Salmagundi" papers. But he merits a paragraph on his own account. He was a journalist and politician, being Secretary of the Navy in Van Buren's administration; but his chief interest was Literature. After the "Salmagundi" papers his first publication was "The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan," which was very successful. He published other satires, a "Life of Washington," some extended poems,—which appear to have been quite forgotten,—and a number of novels. The names of some of them are as follows: "Koningsmarke, the Long Finne," 1823; "The Dutchman's Fireside," 1831; "Westward Ho," 1832; "The Old Continental," 1846; "The Puritan and his Daughter," 1849. Of these probably the best is "The Dutchman's Fireside." It is a story of colonial times in New York, full of bright humor and quaint characterization.

James Kirke
Paulding,
born in New
York, 1779;
died, 1860.

James
Fenimore
Cooper,
born in New
Jersey, 1789;
died in New
York, 1851.

The great novelist of the period, and one whose works have given pleasure to a very wide circle of readers, is James Fenimore Cooper. He was born in Burlington, New Jersey, September 15, 1789. His father was the owner of several thousand acres of land near the head waters of the Susquehanna River, in the state of New York. In the year 1790 the family moved to this property, then on, if not beyond, the frontier of civilization. The village of Cooperstown had been founded on the shore of Otsego Lake, and the family home was established here. It was not, indeed, in the style of the usual pioneer settler, for the Coopers were rich; but it brought Cooper in his boyhood into contact with pioneers, trappers, hunters, and friendly Indians. He was sent to Yale College, but had some difference with the authorities which prevented him from completing the course. From 1806 to 1811 he lived the life of a sailor; at first "before the mast" on a merchant vessel, afterwards as a junior officer in the United States navy. The experiences of these two periods in his early life are reflected in the subjects and materials of his most successful books. He married in 1811, and lived for some years in Westchester County, New York. In 1834 he rebuilt his father's house in Cooperstown, and there, in Otsego Hall, as it was called, lived until his death, September 14, 1851.

While his writings were always widely read, Cooper was never a popular man. He was aggressive in the expression of his opinions, and his views were often unpalatable to the public taste in America and in

Europe. He was an ardent American and republican; and in social circles abroad sometimes gave offence by the freedom with which he defended his ideas. On the other hand, he saw plainly and felt keenly the faults of our then rather crude civilization, and described them in caustic language. One of his novels, "Home as Found," is a satire on American social and business life. Americans were at that time more sensitive to such criticism than they are now; and Cooper's expressions aroused furious anger. He was vilified in the newspapers to such an extent that when he instituted a series of suits for damages, he was almost invariably successful, although the general sympathy was with the offending papers rather than with him. Probably the best service a friend can do to a friend is to point out his faults to him; and there is nothing for which America owes more gratitude to Cooper than for his faithfulness in this respect. But people are not usually grateful for such service; and it is possible that the manner of the criticism may be to blame for the extreme bitterness with which it was received.

Cooper's first novel was "Precaution," published in 1820. It is said that he was reading an English novel and remarked, as he put it down, "I believe I could write a better book myself." It may be that he did; but "Precaution" is not a very good book. It is a story of English life and manners, and naturally suffers from its author's comparative unfamiliarity with the subject. It was suggested to him that he could probably do better with an American theme; and

"Precaution," 1820.

"The Spy,"
1821.

Cooper, taking this good advice, wrote and published, in 1821, "The Spy." With the issue of this he at once became famous. It was an American story, placed in American scenery. It was free from the morbid strain which injures Brown's most effective work. It had movement, life, vivid description, interesting incident. It seemed to European readers like a breath of forest breeze. It was the beginning of one of the great literary successes of history. Between the years 1820 and 1850 Cooper published thirty-nine different works, of which thirty-two are novels; besides a large number of articles, controversial, historical, political, and on other topics. Among these works was "The History of the Navy of the United States," which will always be a standard on its subject. The novels were written very rapidly, and they vary greatly in interest and excellence. There are two series of five each, however, which will probably always be read with pleasure. They are the five "Leatherstocking" tales: "The Pioneer," "The Last of the Mohicans," "The Prairie," "The Pathfinder," "The Deerslayer"; and the five sea tales: "The Pilot," "The Red Rover," "The Water Witch," "The Two Admirals," "Wing and Wing." These owe their special excellence largely to the fact that the frame in which the picture is placed is the actual early experience of the author. The first series reproduces the scenery and the life of his home in the forests of central New York. The second reproduces the life and scenes of his five years of sea experience. The "Leatherstocking" series takes

its name from the leading character in some of them and a prominent character in all; a trapper and hunter named Natty Bumppo, but called "Deer-slayer," "Leatherstocking," "Hawkeye," and other names in the different books. He is one of the living characters of fiction; perhaps more perfect than is exactly natural; but a real, living, breathing, loving, lovable man. Says Lowell, in the "Fable for Critics":

He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
One wild flower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
Of this fresh Western world, and, the thing not to mince,
He has done naught but copy it ill ever since.

* * * * *

The men who have given to one character life
And objective existence are not very rife;
You may number them all, both prose writers and singers,
Without overrunning the bounds of your fingers,
And Natty won't go to oblivion quicker
Than Adams the Parson or Primrose the Vicar.

There is a story that the other series was begun at the suggestion of a discussion about the authorship of Scott's "Pirate." This had just appeared "by the Author of Waverley," and "the Author of Waverley" was still a literary secret. Cooper maintained that the book showed unmistakable signs of being the work of a landsman. The thought suggested the idea of writing a book which should utilize his own sea experiences; and "The Pilot" was the result. These sea stories are bright and breezy, as such tales ought to be. They do not contain any character which has impressed itself on the

world's imagination as has that of "Leatherstocking." But in incident and descriptive power they are probably equal to the other series. One could select a few of Cooper's other stories, as "The Spy," "Satanstoe," or "Lionel Lincoln," which are individually equal to any of the ten already mentioned. But, partly from their mutual connection, partly from their reproduction of his own experiences, and partly from their inherent superiority, the books of these two series are likely always to be the most popular of Cooper's writings. Take for special study a passage from "The Pioneers" describing a deer hunt in the water, and introducing Natty Bumppo and the Indian Mohegan.

THE PIONEERS, CHAPTER XXVII

The buck was now within fifty yards of his pursuers, cutting the water gallantly, and snorting at each breath with terror and his exertions, while the canoe seemed to dance over the waves, as it rose and fell with the undulations made by its own motion. Leatherstocking raised his rifle and freshened the priming, but stood in suspense whether to slay his victim or not.

"Shall I, John, or no?" he said. "It seems but a poor advantage to take of the dumb thing, too. I won't; ~~so~~ it has taken to the water on its own natur', which is the reason that God has given to a deer, and I'll give it the lake play; so, John, lay out your arm, and mind the turn of the buck; it's easy to catch them, but they'll turn like a snake."

¹⁵ The Indian laughed at the conceit of his friend, but continued to send the canoe forward with a velocity that proceeded much more from his skill than his strength.

Both of the old men now used the language of the Delawares when they spoke.

20 "Hugh!" exclaimed Mohegan; "the deer turns his head. Hawkeye, lift your spear."

Natty never moved abroad without taking with him every implement that might, by possibility, be of service in his pursuits. From his rifle he never parted; and 25 although intending to fish with the line, the canoe was invariably furnished with all of its utensils, even to its grate. This precaution grew out of the habits of the hunter, who was often led, by his necessities or his sports, far beyond the limits of his original destination. A few

30 years earlier than the date of our tale, the Leatherstocking had left his hut on the shores of the Otsego, with his rifle and his hounds, for a few days' hunting in the hills; but before he returned he had seen the waters of Ontario.

One, two, or even three hundred miles had once been 35 nothing to his sinews, which were now a little stiffened by age. The hunter did as Mohegan advised, and prepared to strike a blow, with the barbed weapon, into the neck of the buck.

"Lay her more to the left, John," he cried, "lay her 40 more to the left; another stroke of the paddle, and I have him."

While speaking, he raised the spear, and darted it from him like an arrow. At that instant the buck turned, the long pole glanced by him, the iron striking against his 45 horn, and buried itself, harmlessly, in the lake.

"Back water," cried Natty, as the canoe glided over the place where the spear had fallen; "hold water, John."

The pole soon reappeared, shooting upwards from the lake, and as the hunter seized it in his hand, the Indian 50 whirled the light canoe round, and renewed the chase.

But this evolution gave the buck a great advantage; and it also allowed time for Edwards to approach the scene of action.

"Hold your hand, Natty!" cried the youth, "hold 55 your hand! Remember it is out of season."

This remonstrance was made as the batteau arrived close to the place where the deer was struggling with the water, his back now rising to the surface, now sinking beneath it, as the waves curled from his neck, the animal 60 still sustaining itself nobly against the odds.

"Hurrah!" shouted Edwards, inflamed beyond prudence at the sight; "mind him as he doubles—mind him as he doubles; sheer more to the right, Mohegan, more to the right, and I'll have him by the horns; I'll 65 throw the rope over his antlers."

The dark eye of the old warrior was dancing in his head with a wild animation, and the sluggish repose in which his aged frame had been resting in the canoe was now changed to all the rapid inflections of practised 70 agility. The canoe whirled with each cunning evolution of the chase, like a bubble floating in a whirlpool; and when the direction of the pursuit admitted of a straight course, the little bark skimmed the lake with a velocity that urged the deer to seek its safety in some new turn.

75 It was the frequency of these circuitous movements, that, by confining the action to so small a compass, enabled the youth to keep near his companions. More than twenty times both the pursued and the pursuers glided by him, just without the reach of his oars, until 80 he thought the best way to view the sport was to remain stationary, and by watching a favorable opportunity, assist as much as he could, in taking the victim.

He was not required to wait long, for no sooner had he adopted this resolution, and risen in the boat, than 85 he saw the deer coming bravely towards him, with an apparent intention of pushing for a point of land at some distance from the hounds, who were still barking and howling on the shore. Edwards caught the painter of his skiff, and, making a noose, cast it from him with all

90 his force, and luckily succeeded in drawing its knot close around one of the antlers of the buck.

For one instant, the skiff was drawn through the water, but in the next, the canoe glided before it, and Natty, bending low, passed his knife across the throat of the 95 animal, whose blood followed the wound, dyeing the waters. The short time that was passed in the last struggles of the animal was spent by the hunters in bringing their boats together, and securing them in that position, when Leatherstocking drew the deer from the water, and 100 laid its lifeless form in the bottom of the canoe. He placed his hands on the ribs, and on different parts of the body of his prize, and then, raising his head, he laughed in his peculiar manner.

“So much for Marmaduke Temple’s law!” he said. 105 “This warms a body’s blood, old John; I haven’t killed a buck in the lake before this, sin’ many a year. I call that good venison, lad; and I know them that will relish the creatur’s steaks, for all the betterments in the land.”

This is a good example of Cooper’s style in narration. The movement is notably rapid. The selection is brief; and yet contains a good deal. There is one sentence at lines 1-5, the opening sentence of the selection, in which the movements of the deer and of the canoe are both described, and in which each helps to make the other more vivid. The light, quick motion of the canoe is repeatedly indicated, as in lines 16, 46, 50, 70, and 73. There is one passage, lines 22-36, which delays the progress of the story. It seems hardly worth while for the author to enter upon this long explanation, to account for the spear being ready when it is needed. Also Natty’s little speech at lines 8-14, seems a rather formal one for

the time and the occasion. But this touch of formality, and disposition to reason out the grounds of his actions, is a characteristic of "Leatherstocking." The gentleness and essential justness of his character are suggested by the same words and by the action which accompanies them. The contrasted character of the Indian, Mohegan, is indicated in lines 15, and 66-70. The conversation in this passage is skilfully used to advance the narration. Notice how this is done at lines 20, 40, 46. In each of these places, a few words from the actors suggest what would have required one or two sentences of direct narration. This gives variety to the story, and introduces the dramatic element; in which the story tells itself in the acts and words of the persons. It is in such scenes as this that Cooper's most characteristic and best work is done. It was this which gave him his great popularity in Europe. It was a new sensation in Literature, to be taken thus into the woods, and brought into contact with the American hunter and with the Indian. Cooper has been criticised for ascribing virtues to such Indians as Mohegan, which the critics do not believe belong to the Indian character. But Cooper does not fail to introduce cruel and treacherous characters among his Indians; and it is fair to presume that his conception of the Indian character, based as it is on personal knowledge of many individuals, is at least as likely to be correct as is that of his critics.

QUESTIONS

What was Poe's first successful story? What relation did John Pendleton Kennedy have to Poe's career? When and under what title was his first collection of "Tales" issued? What are some of the striking qualities of these? What are some of the most powerful of them? How have Poe's stories been imitated by other writers? To what class of fiction do they belong? Give some of the striking peculiarities of style in "The Fall of the House of Usher." What is Poe's special strength as a writer of fiction? What is his weakness? What are some of the writings of William Ware? Give some account of the writings of William Gilmore Simms and of Catharine Maria Sedgwick. What writer of this period had a share in one of Thackeray's novels? What are the names of some of Kennedy's novels; and what is their general character? Give some account of the life and writings of James Kirke Paulding.

When was James Fenimore Cooper born, and where was his early life spent? Give the principal incidents of his career. What was the cause of his peculiar unpopularity? What was his first novel, and when was it published? When did "The Spy" appear? Give a general account of Cooper's writings. What two series of stories are of special excellence? What character gives name to one of these series? In the selection from "The Pioneers," show how the rapid movement of the narrative is secured. What passage delays the story? How is character suggested? How is conversation used to advance the story? What is the quality in Cooper's work which gave him great popularity in Europe? Is his treatment of Indian character just?

CHAPTER VI

PERIOD OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY 1800-1850

WASHINGTON IRVING

THE publication of the early numbers of "The Sketch Book," in 1819, marks an epoch in American prose, distinct and important as that for American poetry marked by the appearance of "Thanatopsis" two years earlier. That is, it marks the point of time when a thoroughly standard work appears from the pen of an American author. It is not that Irving shows no traces of the influence of the masters of English Literature. On the contrary, we inevitably think of Addison, Steele, and Goldsmith when we read Irving. But the matter of consequence is that Irving is praised, not because he resembles these authors—if, indeed, it can be said with strict truth that he does resemble them—but for the qualities of style which are his own. One may as justly inquire whether Goldsmith is like Irving as whether Irving is like Goldsmith. In other words, Irving is a classic author; one who sets the standard for other writers. It is not necessary to maintain that he is one of the greatest of writers; nor even that he is in a strict sense of the word great. But it is safe to say



your affectionate friend
Washington Irving



that he is, without reference to comparative estimates, good. Here, in Irving's work, is gold coin of standard fineness, money of ultimate redemption in the currency of the world's Literature.

On account of this peculiarly important place in our Literature, and because he illustrates in his works four distinct types of prose composition, namely, fiction, history, biography, and the essay, a complete chapter is given to the study of his writings.

Washington Irving was born in New York in the year 1783. His father was a successful business man, and was able to afford his son all needed opportunities for education. Delicate health and consequent indecision as to his professional career, however, prevented his taking the usual course of study. One incident growing out of this delicacy of physical constitution seems in itself unimportant; but doubtless had an important bearing on his literary work. It was a long voyage on the Hudson River. That would be a commonplace matter now, in a steamboat which traverses the whole length of the river in a day. But, as Irving took it, in a sailing vessel, which leisurely crossed and recrossed, and penetrated bays and creeks along the shore, the voyage was an experience to be remembered; and is reflected in many charming pages of his books. The same delicacy of health called for a season of European travel, which added another important element of culture to the preparation for his literary career. Of even greater consequence was an experience too sacred for careless mention, which yet should always

Washington
Irving, born
in New York,
1783; died,
1859.

be borne in mind in considering Irving's life and work. It was the great sorrow which befell him in the death of the lady whom he had chosen for his wife. How deep that sorrow was may be partly inferred from the fact that, so far as the public knows, he never thought of love or marriage again. And it was doubtless out of that trouble that some of the most precious elements of his beautiful style were drawn.

"*Salmagundi*," 1807.

This early period of Irving's life produced a series of works quite clearly distinguished in subject and in mode of treatment from most of the writings that came later. In 1807 a literary partnership was formed with his older brother William and with James K. Paulding, for the purpose of issuing a series of papers somewhat on the plan of "*The Spectator*." The name "*Salmagundi*" which was given to the papers means a Dutch dish, composed of chopped onions, salt fish, pickles, and some other ingredients. The design was to have a spicy, pungent, partly humorous paper, which should have a solid foundation, corresponding to the salt fish, of substantial sense. "*Salmagundi*" was very popular, especially the papers of which Washington Irving was the author. We notice that this, like Cooper's first work, was essentially an imitation of a British model. Like Cooper, Irving made a much more important essay in Literature and achieved a much more substantial success when he ceased to imitate, and brought out a thoroughly American production. This he did in "*Knickerbocker's History of New York*," which he published in 1809. It is a piece of

"*Knickerbocker's History of New York*," 1809.

rollicking fun. It follows the general lines of the history of the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam; but turns the whole story into the most delicious nonsense. Those old Dutchmen were solid, serious, earnest-minded people, with a due sense of their own importance. But Irving's humor frisks around their portly bodies and tickles their solemn sides in a most irreverent manner. This book was probably the first in America to bring its author a considerable financial return. It is said to have paid him three thousand dollars. But what was of more importance, it gained its author a recognized place among the writers of his time; and thus prepared the way for the more important work which was to follow. This, however, did not appear for nearly ten years. Irving was trying his hand at legal and at mercantile business; was travelling in England and on the Continent of Europe; was brooding over that voyage on the Hudson and over other memories of his life. The failure of the mercantile business in which he was associated with his brothers—most fortunate failure for the world—drove him to his pen again; and in 1819 to 1820, in successive numbers, appeared "The Sketch Book." This must be regarded as the culmination of his literary career. Although what he wrote later is of much greater bulk, and was at first more widely read, Irving's fame will always rest mainly upon the apparently slight sketches which are brought together in this book. It contains "Rip Van Winkle," the immortal tale of the twenty years' sleep, and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." These two sketches have

"The Sketch
Book," 1819-
1820.

embalmed the scenery and the associations of the Hudson forever in the world's literature, and have made Irving's name a household word. In "The Sketch Book" Irving is at his best. The humor is delicate and penetrating. It is of the kind that keeps the reader smiling with a satisfied sense of pleasure, rather than of the sort that makes him break out in broad laughter. It is combined with a tender pathos. As in all humor of the higher type, the smile is not far from the tear. The style has a little of Old World formality; but its carefully balanced sentences are never stiff; and its elegant phrases are never offensively artificial. It becomes a little old-fashioned and takes on the flavor of the antique as the years roll by; but is not likely ever to become antiquated.

"Bracebridge Hall,"
1822.

"Bracebridge Hall," a volume of papers not unlike those in "The Sketch Book," was published in 1822. It takes its name from the English country house which is supposed to be the place of the author's entertainment, while he gives a series of charming sketches of English country life, interspersed with stories from Spain, France, and old New York. It was followed in 1824 by "Tales of a Traveller," a collection of stories the scenes of which are placed some in England, some in Italy, and some in America.

"Tales of a
Traveller,"
1824.

In the year 1826, Irving was appointed to a position in connection with the United States Legation at Madrid. In this situation he naturally entered upon studies and researches in Spanish history, the result of which is seen in many of his later works. Here for a time he lived, at Granada, within the

precincts of the ruined Moorish palace, the Alhambra. His mind became steeped in the historical and legendary events associated with the long occupation of Spain by the Moors, and the contest between them and the Christian knights of the Middle Ages; the contest which ended with the expulsion of the Moors from Granada at the very time of the discovery of America by Columbus. In 1829 he was transferred to England, where he remained for three years. In 1842 he returned to Spain for a four years' term as United States minister.

The first important result of Irving's Spanish studies was "The Life and Voyages of Columbus," which appeared in 1828. He had begun to translate Navarete's "Voyages of Columbus"; but before the translation was completed resolved to prepare, instead, an original work. This was followed by "The Conquest of Granada," 1829; "The Companions of Columbus," 1831; and "The Alhambra," 1832. "The Conquest of Granada" and "The Alhambra" show Irving's style at a pitch of excellence almost as high as that of "The Sketch Book." The charm of humor is lacking; but the romantic atmosphere of the period he was describing and of the place in which he was living was congenial to another side of his nature. His beautiful art of narration appears in these works at its best. Some further Spanish studies appeared, with other matters, in the "Crayon Miscellanies," which was published in 1835. Upon this followed "Astoria," in 1836, and "The Adventures of Captain Bonneville," 1837. These last two

"Life of
Columbus,"
1828.

"Conquest
of Granada,"
1829.

"Com-
panions of
Columbus,"
1831.

"The
Alhambra,"
1832.

"Crayon
Miscella-
nies," 1835.

"Astoria,"
1836.

"Captain
Bonneville,"
1837.

books are illustrations of the beginnings of the movement for the opening and settlement of the country between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean. "Astoria" describes the effort to establish a fur-trading post on the Pacific coast, and Captain Bonneville was one of the most famous explorers of the time. "Astoria" is, for the most part, a thrilling story of the adventures of a party who made their way on horseback, on foot, and by canoe, from St. Louis to the Pacific. They were sixteen months accomplishing the journey which now occupies three days, and suffered incredible hardships. It is a story which will surely grow in historical interest with the passing years.

From the time of his return from Spain in 1846, Irving spent his life at his home on the Hudson, called Sunnyside. His attention during these latter years was turned almost exclusively to historical and biographical work. The work was not so congenial as that of the earlier periods, and the style is consequently not so easy. "The Life of Oliver Goldsmith" and "Mahomet and his Successors" appeared in 1849. He had for a long time been planning a life of Washington, and had done some little work upon it, and he now bent himself seriously to this task which, in some aspects, seemed to be the most important work of his life. In the meantime, in 1855, he issued another volume of miscellanies called "Wolfert's Roost." He toiled on, as he could get opportunity and courage for it, upon the "Life of Washington," until it finally ap-

"Oliver
Goldsmith,"
"Mahomet,"
1849.

"Wolfert's
Roost," 1855.

"Washing-
ton," 1859.

peared in 1859, when Death took the pen from his fingers and his work was done.

Washington Irving was the centre of our first important group of literary men. Boston and Philadelphia had been commercial centres before New York, and we have seen that the literary life of America, centred during the colonial period at Boston, and during the Revolution and the years immediately following, at Philadelphia. But New York was now beginning to take that position of commercial supremacy which it has held so long; and naturally drew to itself a large share of the literary activity of the country. Bryant from New England, and Poe from Virginia, gravitated to the common centre; Halleck and Drake, Willis and Morris, complete the little group of poets. Cooper was writing his series of novels, first at his home in Westchester County, just out of the city, and later at Cooperstown; and Paulding was illustrating the old Dutch life of New York, and was associated with Irving in the "Salmagundi" papers. These names are enough to show that we had then a very interesting group of literary men, of which Washington Irving may well be regarded as the central figure.

Irving may be considered our first distinguished man of letters. That is, he was the first man of remarkable literary powers to give the main effort of his life to Literature. His official positions were avowedly given to him for the purpose of enabling him to devote himself to literary work without anxiety as to his support. It was not then felt that a

literary man should expect to sustain himself by the product of his pen. It was not thought proper for our Government to give direct pensions in such cases; and the diplomatic service was used in Irving's case, as it has since been used in the case of others, to honor and assist a great literary worker. Irving discharged the duties of his official positions with dignity and success; but he will be remembered, of course, not as the minister to Spain, but as the author of "Rip Van Winkle."

We can hardly fail to observe the change in the type of Irving's writings with the progress of his life. The earlier work is marked by a spontaneity and ease of style, which do not, to so high a degree, characterize the later. Humor is much more prominent in the first books, and there is a deepening seriousness as the years go by. With the Spanish experiences comes the interest in Spanish history and the subjects associated with it, such as the origin of the Saracen power in the life of Mahomet, and the career of Columbus. With his return to America, we find a deepening interest in the history of our own land, exemplified in the "Life of Washington." His three years' sojourn in England and his other visits there are reflected in some of his most charming papers, in "Bracebridge Hall" and in "The Sketch Book." Indeed, this part of his life and writings is among the most important of all. The very fact that he held so honorable and so assuredly independent a position in the world of letters made it the easier for him to feel, and make his country-

men feel with him, the indissoluble bonds which hold every intelligent and thoughtful American to the country of our fathers. Remembering how soon after the Revolution Irving lived, so that Washington is said to have held him once in his arms, and that his life included the years of the second war with Great Britain, we must admire the serene elevation of soul which enabled so true an American to lose his national prejudices and feel and describe the beauty of English life and character. Like Lowell in our own day, he helped mightily to bind together the two branches of the great English race.

Take as an example of Irving's work, for special study, the passage from "Rip Van Winkle" which describes Rip's return to the village after his twenty years' sleep.

As he approached the village, he met a number of people, but none whom he knew, which somewhat surprised him, for he had thought himself acquainted with every one in the country round. Their dress, too, was
5 of a different fashion from that to which he was accustomed. They all stared at him with equal marks of surprise, and whenever they cast eyes upon him, invariably stroked their chins. The constant recurrence of this gesture, induced Rip, involuntarily, to do the same,
10 when, to his astonishment, he found his beard had grown a foot long !

He had now entered the skirts of the village. A troop of strange children ran at his heels, hooting after him, and pointing at his gray beard. The dogs, too,
15 not one of which he recognized for an old acquaintance, barked at him as he passed. The very village was altered : it was larger and more populous. There were

rows of houses which he had never seen before, and those which had been his familiar haunts had disappeared. Strange names were over the doors—strange faces at the windows—everything was strange. His mind now misgave him; he began to doubt whether both he and the world around him were not bewitched. Surely this was his native village, which he had left but 25 a day before. There stood the Kaatskill Mountains—there ran the silver Hudson at a distance—there was every hill and dale precisely as it had always been—Rip was sorely perplexed.—“That flagon last night,” thought he, “has addled my poor head sadly!”

30 It was with some difficulty that he found the way to his own house, which he approached with silent awe, expecting every moment to hear the shrill voice of Dame Van Winkle. He found the house gone to decay—the roof fallen in, the windows shattered, and the doors off 35 the hinges. A half-starved dog, that looked like Wolf, was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on. This was an unkind cut indeed.—“My very dog,” sighed poor 40 Rip, “has forgotten me!”

He entered the house, which, to tell the truth, Dame Van Winkle had always kept in neat order. It was empty, forlorn, and apparently abandoned. This desolation overcame all his connubial fears—he called loudly for his wife and children—the lonely chambers 45 rang for a moment with his voice, and then all again was silence.

He now hurried forth, and hastened to his old resort, the village inn—but it too was gone. A large rickety wooden building stood in its place, with great gaping 50 windows, some of them broken, and mended with old hats and petticoats, and over the door was painted, “The Union Hotel, by Jonathan Doolittle.” Instead of the great tree that used to shelter the quiet little Dutch

inn of yore, there now was reared a tall naked pole,
55 with something on the top that looked like a red night-
cap, and from it was fluttering a flag, on which was a
singular assemblage of stars and stripes—all this was
strange and incomprehensible. He recognized on the
sign, however, the ruby face of King George, under
60 which he had smoked so many a peaceful pipe, but
even this was singularly metamorphosed. The red coat
was changed for one of blue and buff, a sword was held
in the hand instead of a sceptre, the head was decorated
with a cocked hat, and underneath was painted in large
65 characters, GENERAL WASHINGTON.

There was, as usual, a crowd of folk about the door,
but none that Rip recollects. The very character of
the people seemed changed. There was a busy, bustling,
disputatious tone about it, instead of the accustomed
70 phlegm and drowsy tranquillity. He looked in vain for
the sage Nicholas Vedder, with his broad face, double
chin, and fair long pipe, uttering clouds of tobacco smoke,
instead of idle speeches; or Van Bummel, the school-
master, doling forth the contents of an ancient newspaper.
75 In place of these, a lean bilious-looking fellow, with his
pockets full of handbills, was haranguing vehemently
about rights of citizens—election—members of Con-
gress—liberty—Bunker's hill—heroes of seventy-six
—and other words that were a perfect Babylonish jargon
80 to the bewildered Van Winkle.

The appearance of Rip, with his long, grizzled beard,
his rusty fowling-piece, his uncouth dress, and the army
of women and children that had gathered at his heels,
soon attracted the attention of the tavern politicians.
85 They crowded round him, eying him from head to foot,
with great curiosity. The orator hustled up to him, and
drawing him partly aside, inquired, “on which side he
voted?” Rip stared in vacant stupidity. Another short
but busy little fellow pulled him by the arm, and rising

90 on tiptoe, inquired in his ear "whether he was Federal or Democrat." Rip was equally at a loss to comprehend the question ; when a knowing, self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat, made his way through the crowd, putting them to the right and left with his elbows 95 as he passed, and planting himself before Van Winkle, with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane, his keen eyes and sharp hat penetrating, as it were, into his very soul, demanded in an austere tone, "what brought him to the election with a gun on his shoulder, and a 100 mob at his heels, and whether he meant to breed a riot in the village?"

"Alas ! gentlemen," cried Rip, somewhat dismayed, "I am a poor, quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King, God bless him !"

105 Here a general shout burst from the bystanders — "a tory ! a tory ! a spy ! a refugee ! hustle him ! away with him ! "

It was with great difficulty that the self-important man in the cocked hat restored order ; and having assumed a 110 tenfold austerity of brow, demanded again of the unknown culprit, what he came there for, and whom he was seeking. The poor man humbly assured him that he meant no harm, but merely came there in search of some of his neighbors, who used to keep about the tavern.

115 "Well — who are they? — name them."

Rip bethought himself a moment, and inquired, "Where's Nicholas Vedder?"

There was a silence for a little while, when an old man replied, in a thin, piping voice, "Nicholas Vedder? Why, 120 he is dead and gone these eighteen years! There was a wooden tombstone in the churchyard that used to tell all about him, but that's rotten and gone too."

"Where's Brom Dutcher?"

125 "Oh, he went off to the army in the beginning of the war; some say he was killed at the storming of Stony

Point—others say he was drowned in the squall, at the foot of Antony's Nose. I don't know—he never came back again."

"Where's Van Bummel, the schoolmaster?"

130 "He went off to the wars, too; was a great militia general, and is now in Congress."

Rip's heart died away, at hearing of these sad changes in his home and friends, and finding himself thus alone in the world. Every answer puzzled him, too, by treating 135 of such enormous lapses of time, and of matters which he could not understand: war—Congress—Stony Point! —he had no courage to ask after any more friends, but cried out in despair, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?"

140 "Oh, Rip Van Winkle!" exclaimed two or three. "Oh, to be sure! that's Rip Van Winkle yonder, leaning against the tree."

Rip looked, and beheld a precise counterpart of himself as he went up the mountain; apparently as lazy and 145 certainly as ragged. The poor fellow was now completely confounded. He doubted his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man. In the midst of his bewilderment, the man in the cocked hat demanded who he was, and what was his name?

150 "God knows," exclaimed he at his wit's end; "I'm not myself—I'm somebody else—that's me yonder—no—that's somebody else, got into my shoes—I was myself last night, but I fell asleep on the mountain, and they've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and 155 I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am."

Notice how just the points of change which a man like Rip would observe are indicated, and how the change is emphasized by contrast with the unchang-

ing mountains and river, lines 12-29. Then as he comes to his own old home, the half-starved dog appears, and suggests the pathetic words, "My very dog has forgotten me," lines 30-40. The changes about the inn, the crowd of strange people, the strange subjects of their talk, the discovery that one and another of his old friends is gone, till he cries, "Does nobody here know Rip Van Winkle?" line 138,—these all lead up to the discovery of his counterpart, in the person of his son, now a grown man. There is an indescribable blending of humor and pathos in the poor fellow's utter confusion — "They've changed my gun, and everything's changed, and I'm changed, and I can't tell what's my name, or who I am," lines 154-156. The successive pictures in this bit of descriptive narration are worth careful study. First the general appearance of the village, as he comes into it, is indicated by a few particulars and by contrast with the natural scenery around. Then the ruined home is put before us in three lines of suggestion, so that an artist could paint a picture of the place, with the homeless dog and the homeless man. Then we are shown the village inn with its pretension and unthrift, with the indications of the changed times in the change of name and sign and the appearance of the liberty pole. Notice how the concrete particulars, which Irving uses in these descriptions, make a vivid picture, instead of the dim, colorless impression which would have been produced by such general terms as we have used in writing of it. In the same

way two or three individuals are picked out of the crowd, and without being named are yet perfectly individualized by suggestive words. The orator "bustled" up to him, line 86; the "short, busy little fellow rising on tiptoe inquired in his ear," lines 89-90; "the self-important old gentleman, in a sharp cocked hat," "with one arm akimbo, the other resting on his cane," "planted himself before Van Winkle," lines 92-96. It would be a dull imagination indeed which could fail to see these forms. This vividness is secured mainly by suggestion. The particulars are few but always characteristic, and each one carries to an active mind the thought of other particulars which naturally belong with it. So the mind of the reader is constantly helping the author to make the impression clear and strong. The words are largely simple, strong, homely, Saxon derivatives. It would be interesting to compare the selection, on this point, with the "Essay on the Mutability of Literature," in the same volume, and see how the author suits his diction to his subject. If this selection is read aloud, one can hardly fail to notice the balance of the sentences. It is more apparent to the ear than to the eye: "A half-starved dog that looked like Wolf, was skulking about it. Rip called him by name, but the cur snarled, showed his teeth, and passed on," lines 35-37. The accented words call attention to the natural points of emphasis, and it will be seen that the sentence is rhythmical. This will be found true of most of the descriptive and narrative passages. It is not obtrusive. One

does not fall into a sing-song tone in reading it. But the rhythm is unmistakable and lends a peculiar attraction to the style. It would be useful for the student to carry this analysis of Irving's style still further, and look for himself into the secret of its charm. For here we are dealing with one of the great masters in the use of the English language.

QUESTIONS

What is the special importance of the work of Washington Irving in American Literature? Give some of the principal incidents of his early life. What great sorrow strongly affected his career? What public offices did he hold, and how did they influence his literary work? Where and how did he spend the last years of his life? Of what group of literary men was he the central figure? What were the "Salmagundi" papers, and when were they published? Describe "Knickerbocker's History of New York." When was "The Sketch Book" published, and what position does it hold among his works? What two particularly famous stories does it contain? What works followed this? What is the quality of Irving's humor? What are the chief works which show the influence of his life in Spain? Describe "Astoria" and "The Adventures of Captain Bonneville." What were Irving's principal biographical works? In the selection from "Rip Van Winkle" note the especially suggestive points of description at the beginning. What notable blending of humor and pathos is there? How are the pictures made vivid? How are the characters individualized? What is the character of the diction? What peculiar quality is noticeable in the sentence structure?

CHAPTER VII

PERIOD OF THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1800-1850

BIOGRAPHY. HISTORY. THE ESSAY. ORATORY

AN author of this period who has gathered and arranged materials for the biographical work of many others, is Jared Sparks, professor at Harvard College and afterwards its president. He published, in 1837, a "Life of Washington"; edited Washington's writings and correspondence; was the editor of a series of volumes of American Biography, of which he wrote a number of the lives himself; edited the works of Franklin, with a biography; and published a large amount of other biographical material.

Jared
Sparks,
1789-1866.

With this period begins the careful study of history and its record in works of enduring literary value by American writers. The first name to be mentioned is that of George Bancroft, who devoted a long and honored life to writing the early history of the United States. His life extended into our own times, and his work appeared at intervals during all these years. It was planned, however, and the first volumes appeared, in the first half of the century; and therefore it is properly considered here. Besides his literary work Bancroft was active in public life — in the Legislature of Massachusetts, as Secre-

George
Bancroft,
born in Mas-
sachusetts,
1800; died
at Wash-
ington, D. C.,
1891.

tary of the Navy, and as United States minister to Great Britain and Germany. The first volume of his "History of the United States" appeared in 1834, and the successive volumes followed at long intervals, during almost all his lifetime. He frequently revised, corrected, and enlarged his work; and it is a monument of painstaking accuracy. The style is clear, and the diction elegant.

William
Hickling
Prescott,
born in Mas-
sachusetts,
1796; died,
1859.

William H. Prescott was a student of history from the beginning of his active life, and early selected Spanish history as his special field, planning a course of ten years' investigation, to be followed by ten years of writing. He carried out his plan almost literally, and in spite of difficulties which many would have regarded as insuperable. Losing the use of his eyes, he was obliged to rely upon the services of a reader for his studies, and to devise some method of composition which should be practicable for him in his blindness. Instead of dictating to an amanuensis, he used a writing case, consisting of a frame crossed by brass wires, with a sheet of carbonized paper such as is used in duplicating. Guided by the wires, he would trace his sentence on the carbonized sheet, making indelible marks on the white paper below. In this manner Prescott produced the books which gave him a world-wide reputation. The "History of Ferdinand and Isabella" appeared in 1837. It was followed by "The Conquest of Mexico," in 1843; "Biographical and Critical Miscellanies," in 1845; "The Conquest of Peru," in 1847; "The Reign of Philip II," in 1855-1858. He

also edited and republished Robertson's "Charles V," adding a supplement giving the life of Charles after his abdication. Prescott's works, taken together, constitute a history of Spain, in its relations to America and to the Reformation, during the whole period of its greatness. It was a neglected field of history, and of special interest to American readers. Prescott's works met with a hearty welcome in Europe as well as at home. They were widely translated; and praised for their thorough scholarship as well as for their charming style. With Bancroft's works, they placed American historical composition on the same established footing which Bryant, Poe, Cooper, and Irving had gained for other forms of Literature.

We note here the beginning of the Juvenile Literature, which in recent times has attained such great proportions. Samuel Griswold Goodrich deserves to be called the Patriarch of this exceedingly useful sort of writing; which, however, has not in most cases brought enduring fame to its authors. Under the pen name of "Peter Parley," he produced a series of works, mostly historical in their character, which were very widely read by the young people of the last generation. His immense volume "The History of All Nations," with its profuse illustrations, queer enough, from our present standpoint of criticism, had a great deal to do with the education of the fathers and mothers of the present generation of school children. Also during this period the brothers Jacob and John Stephen Cabot Abbott began to

Samuel
Griswold
Goodrich,
1793-1860.

Jacob Abbot,
1803-1879.

issue their long and useful series of juvenile writings. Jacob Abbott, in the "Rollo Books," the "Lucy Books," and others taught many useful lessons in many departments of knowledge and of good morals. With John S. C. Abbott he published a long series of biographies which helped to make the great men of the past familiar to a whole generation. These books were thoroughly wholesome in their tone; and were models of clear, simple, unpretending English. John S. C. Abbott was especially interested in the Napoleon family; and besides juvenile works on different members of the famous Bonaparte tribe, wrote an extended history of the first Napoleon, which is an interesting work albeit somewhat rose-colored in its portrayal.

One of the most popular books of this period was "Two Years Before the Mast," by Richard Henry Dana, Jr., published in 1840. Dana had, on account of trouble with his eyes, taken the voyage around Cape Horn, as a common sailor. His record of this experience made a book which was widely read at home and abroad, was translated into several languages, and has taken its place as a standard work of its kind.

Exposition.

In the second division of prose composition, Exposition, there are in this period many writers of essays and treatises whose works take rank as Literature. Here again we meet the name of that strange, brilliant, and unhappy genius, Edgar Allan Poe. Poe's theories as to the true principles of composition in prose and verse have been already

John S. C.
Abbott,
1805-1877.

Richard
Henry Dana,
1815-1882.

Edgar A.
Poe.

mentioned. These he elaborated in a lecture, called "The Poetic Principle." He also wrote a semi-philosophical essay called "Eureka," in which he thought he had made a contribution to metaphysical discussion. But in this, Poe was undertaking work for which he was ill equipped, and the essay is valuable chiefly as illustrating the character and genius of the author. In his magazine work, whether as editor or contributor, he did valuable and interesting critical work. Some of his judgments were perhaps hasty and ill considered; but he was keen and incisive; and on the whole his critical work could ill be spared from the body of our Literature.

Nathaniel Parker Willis has already been mentioned among the poets. But his chief work, both in quality and quantity, belongs in this division. He was a charming essayist, writing delightful, gossipy papers about men and things, at home and abroad. He loved the city and the country both. He liked society and he liked solitude—that is, a perfectly safe and comfortable solitude near home. Liking so many different things, he probably did not love any of them very intensely. At least there is nothing very intense in any of his work. He does not teach, or inspire, or disturb us with deep questionings; but he entertained, amused, interested, the people of his time, with bright, pleasant, witty, and withal pure and morally wholesome essays. "Sketches," "Pencillings by the Way," "Loiterings of Travel," "Rural Letters," "Hurry-Graphs," are titles of some of his volumes which suggest the character of his work.

Nathaniel
Parker
Willis, born
in Maine,
1806; died in
New York,
1867.

George
Ticknor,
born in Mas-
sachusetts,
1791; died,
1871.

Of a very different nature was the literary work of George Ticknor. An accomplished scholar in the languages and literatures of Europe, he held for many years the chair of "Modern Languages and Literature" at Harvard College. He made Spanish Literature his specialty, and published, in 1849, his "History of Spanish Literature." This is a monumental work, received by scholars as authoritative in its department, and written in a style which renders it attractive to the general reader.

Two writers of this period gave their lives to scientific research, and recorded the results of their studies in such a manner as to be read by many, and to exert a great influence over later writers. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft was an enthusiastic student of men. He travelled extensively through the unsettled parts of America, and lived for months and years among the Indians. The results of his years of study appeared in a large number of Government Reports, and in other publications. Two of these, "The Myth of Hiawatha" and "The Indian Fairy Book," gave Longfellow the subject and a considerable part of the material of his famous poem "Hiawatha."

One of the most interesting characters in American life is that of John James Audubon. He was devoted to animals, and especially to birds, as was Schoolcraft to Indians. His life was largely spent in tramping through the woods, collecting specimens and preparing them for preservation. He was an artist of genius, and made drawings of his specimens.

Henry Rowe
Schoolcraft,
born in New
York, 1793;
died in
Washington,
1864.

John James
Audubon,
born in
Louisiana,
1780; died
in New York,
1851.

These, with written descriptions, were published during the years 1827 to 1853 in a series of volumes called "The Birds of America," "Ornithological Biography," and "The Quadrupeds of America." The last was completed and finally published by his sons after his death. "The Birds of America," with "The Ornithological Biography," constitutes a very unique and priceless work. It was necessarily very costly, but it was sold in surprisingly large numbers, and gave its author a very high place in the scientific world. The combination of naturalist, artist, and writer was a rare one and produced a rare result.

The theological discussions of the period have left their mark in Literature chiefly in the writings of William Ellery Channing, the great leader of the Unitarian movement. He was in his youth a member of the congregation of Dr. Samuel Hopkins, mentioned in a previous chapter. His works were of wide influence in the religious thought of the time, and have been repeatedly republished by the official publishing society of the Unitarian denomination. Thus the parts of them which really belong to Literature have not been separated from the mass of controversial matter. They are full, however, of passages of eloquent discussion and strong reasoning. Channing was one of the great preachers of his day; and so with him we naturally pass to the study of the great oratorical group of the period, *Oratory*, a group which has not been equalled in our history.

The Constitution of our country has one peculiarity which has involved a great deal of discussion.

William
Ellery Chan-
ning, born in
Rhode
Island, 1780;
died in Ver-
mont, 1842.

That is the relation between the State and the National Governments. General Garfield said that "Unsettled questions have no respect for the repose of nations"; and our fathers left the question of the relative powers of State and Nation unsettled. Thus there have always been two great parties in our politics divided by their view of these relative powers. Under various names, the political parties have really been Federal Government or State Government parties. Questions of tariff, currency, and internal improvements have largely turned upon interpretations of the rights and powers of the general Government. Closely connected with the same central problem was the question of slavery. Slaves were held in large numbers in the Southern States; in comparatively small numbers, or not at all, in the Northern. As the Southern leaders sought for means and grounds of defence for slavery, they naturally fell back upon the right of the State to control its own institutions. As Northern leaders sought for means of restricting slavery, of preventing its extension, of gradually securing its abolition, they as naturally maintained the right of the general Government to act in a matter which seemed to them to concern the interests of all. We can easily see that these questions would demand the greatest ability for their discussion. In connection with them issues were sure to arise which would intensely engage the feelings of the people. The question of slavery especially, whenever it was discussed, aroused great bitterness. Statesmen foresaw that it might

bring the two great sections of the country into armed conflict; and the greatest and most patriotic men were endeavoring to handle it in such a way that conflict might be avoided; while the fervent feeling of men on both sides was constantly forcing it into prominence. These are some of the important conditions out of which the oratory of the time arose.

Edward Everett represents, in a moderate mediating way, the Federal view. He began life as a Unitarian minister, became professor of Greek at Harvard College, of which he was afterwards president; was active in politics, in the House of Representatives, as governor of Massachusetts, as United States senator, as Secretary of State, and as minister to England. But his greatest fame was gained by set orations delivered for special objects. Especially famous was the oration on Washington, delivered a great many times, by which a large sum of money was earned for the purchase and preservation of Mount Vernon, Washington's home on the Potomac. Everett is our greatest example of the finished, polished orator. Rounded periods, classical allusions, and elegant diction are his characteristics. In these respects he is preëminent, and his works will always repay careful study.

The representative of the Federal idea in the Southern States is Henry Clay of Kentucky. He was for many years a leader in the House of Representatives and in the United States Senate, and held Cabinet office. Like some other popular fa-

Edward
Everett, born
in Massa-
chusetts,
1794; died,
1865.

Henry Clay,
born in
Virginia,
1777; died
in Wash-
ington, D. C.,
1852.

vorites, however, he did not succeed in reaching the Presidency. He stood in the popular mind especially as the representative of the idea or policy of "Protection to American Industries," or, as he called it, "The American System," and of "Internal Improvements." His eloquence was largely dependent upon his voice and personal presence; and he has not left as interesting specimens of his oratory as have his great contemporaries.

The representative of the extreme state rights view is John C. Calhoun of South Carolina. He was one of the leaders in our politics for a generation. In the House of Representatives and in the Senate, as a Cabinet officer and as Vice-President, he was prominently before the people. He was the great logician of the Senate. Granting his premises, it was seldom possible to deny his conclusions. In weight of argument his oratory is probably unexcelled. It did not have the rhetorical brilliancy of Everett, nor the fiery force of Clay. But neither of these great men could have met him successfully in debate. That was reserved for the last and greatest of this remarkable group.

Daniel Webster is by general consent given the first place among American orators. Like the others of this famous group, he served in Congress, in the Senate, and in the Cabinet, but never reached the Presidency. He is the great expounder of the Constitution, maintaining the power of the general Government, as opposed to Calhoun's extreme state rights view. He was a man of extraordinary per-

John C.
Calhoun,
born in
South Caro-
lina, 1782;
died in
Washington,
D. C., 1852.

Daniel
Webster,
born in New
Hampshire,
1782; died
in Massa-
chusetts,
1852.

sonal presence. The impression he made in his great addresses is said to have been overpowering. He was strong in forensic as in political oratory. In the famous Dartmouth College case, it is said that he achieved the wonderful result of moving the judges of the Supreme Court to tears. His best-known speech was made in reply to Robert Y. Hayne, of South Carolina, who had made, in the Senate, an attack upon Massachusetts. On such a subject Webster could speak with the deepest feeling; and this often-quoted address is perhaps the most famous bit of oratory in American Literature. A short passage from it will repay special study.

Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts ; she needs none. There she is. Behold her, and judge for yourselves. There is her history ; the world knows it by heart. The past, at least, is secure. There is Boston, and Concord, and Lexington, and Bunker Hill ; and there they will remain forever. The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for Independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State from New England to Georgia ; and there they will lie forever. And, sir, where American Liberty raised its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it, if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint, shall succeed in separating it from that Union, by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand, in the end, by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked ; it will stretch forth its arm with whatever of vigor it may still retain over the friends who gather around it ; and it will

fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin.

* * * * *

I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the Union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recess behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty when the bonds that unite us together shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counsellor in the affairs of this government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the Union may be best preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people when it should be broken up and destroyed. While the Union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise! God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind! When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the Republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured, bearing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory as "What is all this worth?" nor those other words of delusion and folly, "Liberty first and Union afterwards;" but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and

over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart,—“Liberty *and* Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.”

This passage may be compared with that from Fisher Ames given in a former chapter. The nature of the subject and occasion will account for the greater warmth and more impassioned style. It is the closing passage of the address. The argument has been completed, and Webster's object now is to carry the feelings of his audience with him to the repudiation of the idea of possible disunion. He wishes, also, to defend Massachusetts without intensifying state or sectional antagonism. So he most eloquently defends her by asserting that she needs no defence. It is a fine example of the power of understatement. Every one feels that he might have said far more if he would; and this “far more” is more effective thus supplied by the reader or listener, than it would have been if fully stated by the speaker. He points to her record, specifying occasions when the glory of Massachusetts is combined with the glory of other states. Every name, such as Lexington and Bunker Hill, tends to arouse feelings of patriotism, to strengthen love for the Union, and discourage thoughts of disunion. Then he gives a glimpse of the horror of disunion. It is just enough to make the thought of the Union glorious by contrast. He will not admit the possibility of separation; and he closes with the eloquent denial that there can be any essential conflict between liberty and union, thus refuting the plea of the disunionist, North and South,

the last sentence being the memorable utterance "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable." Notice the elevation of tone, the rhythmic swing of the sentences, the power of the epithets and examples chosen, the impassioned character of the diction, all of which bring this bit of oratory to the very borderland of poetry.

Forensic oratory has a distinguished representative in this period,—Rufus Choate, of Massachusetts. He was active in political life and served one term in the United States Senate; but his career was chiefly in the law, and he is remembered for his forensic arguments and appeals. He studied with William Wirt, the great lawyer of the preceding generation, and held a similar position at the bar in his own time. He was a man of fine and broad culture, and probably one of the most eloquent advocates who ever addressed a court.

QUESTIONS

Give some account of the life and works of Jared Sparks.

Give some account of the life and works of George Bancroft.

What special difficulty did William Hickling Prescott overcome in his literary work? What are his principal historical works? Give some account of the Juvenile writings of S. G. Goodrich, Jacob Abbott, and John S. C. Abbott. What very popular book was written about this time by R. H. Dana, Jr.? What work was done in criticism by Edgar A. Poe? What are the characteristics of the essays of N. P. Willis? Describe the literary work of George Ticknor. What two distinguished writers on scientific topics? Describe their works. What was the literary work of William E. Channing? What were some of the conditions which influenced the political oratory of the period?

Rufus
Choate,
1799-1859.

Give some account of the life and work of Edward Everett, Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and Daniel Webster. In the selection from Webster what is the general oratorical purpose? What example of understatement for rhetorical effect? How does the orator avoid rousing sectional feeling? What are some of the notable points of style? What distinguished forensic orator in this period?



PART THREE

**PERIOD OF THE LATER NINETEENTH
CENTURY, 1850-1880**



CHAPTER VIII

PERIOD OF THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1850-1880

INTRODUCTION. SOCIAL FACTS AND FORCES

THE thirty years from 1850 to 1880 were marked by great movements in national life and thought. We are too near this period to be able to judge it perfectly, but we can trace some of the leading lines of thought and action which are reflected in the Literature.

A notable characteristic of the time is the accelerated rate at which the population grew, and the waste places of the western territories were occupied. Two chief features of this movement were the enormous increase of immigration, especially from Ireland and Germany, and the rapid development of steam transportation. We shall detect the Irish and German elements in our Literature; and we shall notice the appearance of the railroad and the steamboat man. Connected with the same process of development is the opening of the gold mines of California, and the silver mines of the Rocky Mountains, bringing with it a new phase of life and experience, sure to find expression in a living Literature.

Perhaps more important than all these, in its effect upon the literary life of our country, is the wide diffu-

Rapid
Growth of
Population.

Diffusion of
Intelligence.

Common Schools.

sion of intelligence during this period. The common school system grew to its full development, and extended itself into all sections of the country; and we thus came to have the largest reading public that has ever been known in history.

Sunday-schools.

With the extension of the public school, came the wide growth of the Sunday-school. This has, probably, never been recognized in such a work as this, as an influence having any special bearing upon Literature. But every Sunday-school was a society for arousing interest in the English Bible, the greatest monument of English Literature. Every Sunday-school, moreover, with few exceptions, maintained a circulating library. Doubtless the ideas of those who managed these little libraries were often crude. The "good little girl who never said I won't," and "the good little boy who died," figured largely in the books they circulated. Yet these libraries tended strongly to foster a taste for reading; and they were largely influential in leading to the development of juvenile Literature, which in some instances has reached a high point of artistic excellence.

Chautauqua.

A very important outgrowth of the Sunday-school movement, in this respect, is the increase of summer gatherings for study and lectures, and the formation, all over the country, of circles for reading and study, — the movement which the name "Chautauqua" suggests to every intelligent American.

Journalism.

Another sign of the same general diffusion of intelligence is the rapid growth of journalism. We have already noted the establishment of the first newspaper,

in Boston, in 1690. In the period now under review, every community of a thousand people must have its newspaper or two; and the great metropolitan journals publish the material of a large volume every day. The honor of the first attempt to establish a monthly magazine probably belongs to Philadelphia, where, in 1741, Franklin conducted from February to July "The General Magazine and Historical Chronicle for all the British Plantations in America," and John Webbe published three numbers of the "American Magazine; or a Monthly View of the Political State of the British Colonies." Thomas Paine conducted "The Pennsylvania Magazine; or American Monthly Museum" at Philadelphia for about a year, 1775-1776; and issued the "Crisis" at irregular intervals from 1776 to 1783. The "Portfolio" was established in Philadelphia, 1801, by Joseph Dennie ("Oliver Oldschool"). At first a weekly publication, it afterwards became a monthly, and as such lasted till 1827. Charles Brockden Brown and John Quincy Adams were among its contributors. This probably deserves the honorable place of the first monthly magazine to reach a really vigorous life in America. The year 1815 saw the establishment of the "North American Review," which had the honor of first presenting Bryant's "Thanatopsis" to the public; which for many years was a dignified literary and philosophical quarterly; and which now is published in New York as a political monthly. "The Knickerbocker; or New York Monthly Magazine" was founded in 1833, and lived till 1858. In the follow-

First
Monthly
Magazine,
1741.

The "Port-
folio."

ing year, 1834, "The Southern Literary Messenger" was established in Richmond, Virginia. Poe was its editor till 1837. In 1847 John R. Thompson, an accomplished literary man who, unfortunately, has left very little of permanent value, took charge of this magazine, and under his direction its career was a brilliant one. Donald G. Mitchell's most successful works made their first appearance in it; as well as the early writings of John Esten Cooke, Paul Hamilton Hayne, and Henry Timrod. The important points in magazine history, from this time, are: the founding of "Harper's New Monthly Magazine," New York, 1850; "Putnam's Monthly Magazine," New York, 1853; "The Atlantic Monthly," Boston, 1857; "Scribner's Monthly," New York, 1870 (became "The Century Magazine," 1881). With the great increase of the reading public, and the cheapening of printing, especially with the development of the art of reproducing engravings by photographic processes, the number of magazines has multiplied until it would require a volume to describe them all. The monthly magazine has been one of the great influences in our Literature. It has afforded an easy way of access to the public; and a very large proportion of all the Literature of the past fifty years has made its first appearance in the pages of one or another of these monthlies.

A peculiar feature of the publishing business of the early part of this period and the later part of the preceding was the "Annual." This was a collection of miscellaneous writings, stories, essays, and verse,

bound in attractive forms, usually illustrated with steel-plate engravings, and issued at about Christmas time. They were much used as inexpensive and graceful presents. They had such titles as "The Token," or "The Talisman," and some of them were issued for a number of successive years. Some of Hawthorne's earliest writings were first published in "The Token."

Leading in the movement for the diffusion of intelligence were the colleges and universities. Soon after Harvard, 1636, followed the College of William and Mary in Virginia, 1693, and Yale, in Connecticut, 1700. During the Eighteenth Century, Princeton, 1746; Columbia, originally called King's, 1754; Brown, 1764; Dartmouth, 1769; Rutgers, 1770; and Hampden Sydney, 1775, were added to the list. From that time the growth of the institutions for the higher education was very rapid. In connection with the public school system, there grew up a large number of normal schools for the training of teachers. As largely instrumental in developing these institutions, and as a great force in the guidance of our educational progress in general, we should mention here the name of Horace Mann. There has been in the past fifty years, a strong tendency in the newer states to establish state universities and technical and agricultural schools. During the same period, the religious denominations have founded many colleges to insure the religious training of their youth, and the preparation of young men for their ministry. These two tendencies have resulted in a great and, Colleges.

as many think, undue multiplication of institutions calling themselves colleges and universities. But an exceedingly valuable result of this has been the bringing of opportunities for more advanced study near to the youth of all parts of the country, and the establishment of centres of culture in every district. There can be no doubt that while the small colleges have tended somewhat to keep down the standard of scholarship, they have also tended powerfully to extend intelligence, and awaken the desire for thorough teaching and exact knowledge.

An important feature of the educational history of the latter part of this period is the development of the "University" idea. The founding of Johns Hopkins University at Baltimore in 1873, as an institution providing facilities for graduate study, gave a great impulse to this tendency; and we now have a large number of universities, in the sense of schools of advanced study, carrying on non-professional courses beyond the B. A. degree, and making provision for original scholarly research.

Our country has had its full share in the great scientific movement which so strongly characterizes the present century. With us, perhaps, even more emphatically than with any other people, it has tended to take the form of material invention. We have been foremost in the race to apply most rapidly the powers of steam and electricity to the service of industrial enterprise and domestic convenience. The enormous changes in our industrial and social life through such influences are clearly reflected in our

Literature. The scientific habit of mind, which takes nothing for granted, but investigates all things, has taken strong hold upon our national way of thinking, and has made its mark for good and for evil upon our writers.

A broad thought movement characterized the later years of the previous period, and the earlier years of this, the most conspicuous representatives of which were the writers and thinkers who were called "Transcendentalists." Many of those who were leaders of thought cannot properly be given this name; but the "Transcendentalists" were leaders in many directions, and their special type of thinking left a peculiarly deep impression upon our Literature. The movement called "Transcendentalism" was, first, reactionary, in philosophy, theology, and morals. It was a reaction from the "Materialism" of the eighteenth century. It interpreted the teachings of the German philosophers, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel; receiving their teaching, however, for the most part through Coleridge and Carlyle. It was, further, a reaction from negative theology, not returning, however, to older views, except in the case of some few of its leaders, as, notably, Orestes A. Brownson, who went from radical negation clear over to the Roman Catholic Church. It was finally a reaction from the limitations of "Puritanism" in conduct, and sought a broader, freer life.

The movement was, secondly, reformatory, looking to great improvements in social life. The most

"Transcen-
dentalism."

conspicuous illustration of this phase of it was the "Brook Farm" experiment. This was an attempt to form a "society" or "family" of intellectual people who should live together, and by sharing the necessary work, reduce it to a small amount, and so have leisure for studies and intellectual labor. George Ripley was the leader of the experiment, and George William Curtis, A. B. Alcott, O. A. Brownson, and Nathaniel Hawthorne were associated with him. Hawthorne wrote in regard to it: "I went to live in Arcady, and found myself up to my chin in a barnyard."

The movement was, thirdly, Literary. This has been its most enduring contribution to life. Its philosophy is not now very influential, and its reform proved impracticable. But in Literature, it stood for (*a*) ideality, recognizing the mystery of nature and life, and exalting the spiritual; for (*b*) hope, looking forward to better and greater days to come, and emphasizing the overruling power of good in the Universe; for (*c*) brotherhood, exalting man as man, and lending its support to all that tended to bring men together, and lift them toward what is higher. Of this aspect of "Transcendentalism," Emerson is the chief representative; and it would be difficult to estimate the extent of his influence on the younger writers of his time, and of the time closely following.

Another characteristic feature of this period, which made itself strongly felt upon Literature, was the antislavery contest. This question we have seen

forcing itself upon the attention of our public men, in spite of their constant efforts to keep it out of the way. Compromise after compromise was made and failed, until at last the political question narrowed itself to the issue whether the general Government could and should prevent the extension of slavery into the territories. On this issue Abraham Lincoln was elected President; and the slave states, except Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, passed ordinances of Secession. Then followed the four terrible but glorious years of civil war. We shall find the traces of this great national struggle in all the Literature of the time.

The religious life of this period is marked by several striking features. It is a time of restless thinking and of many changes of feeling, between scepticism and faith; and all these changes are reflected in the Literature. It is the time of the missionary movement of the modern Christian churches. American religious life has the peculiar feature of the gathering together in one country of the faiths and forms of all other countries. This fact, with our perfect freedom of religion and entire separation between Church and State, has resulted in a great multiplication of religious sects. The great advances in scientific discovery and in scholarly investigation have affected religious thinking; and their effect is seen constantly in the Literature of the time. One cannot fail to notice that the poets of this period are profoundly interested in religious themes. Their spirit, in this respect, is very

Religious Life.

different from that of most of the poets of the last period.

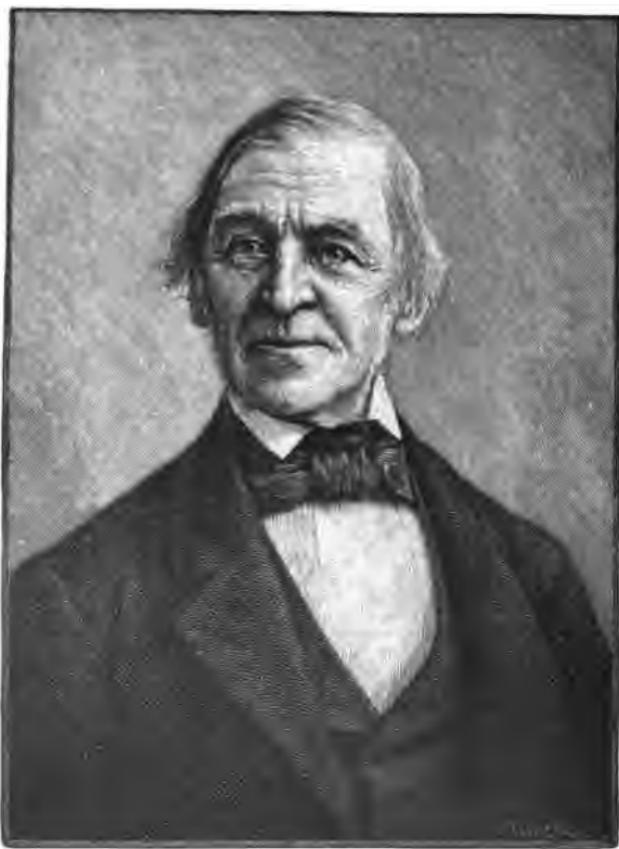
Social
Problems.

The great industrial development and rapid increase of population have brought to the attention of men social problems which were not thought of in earlier times. The factory hand, the denizen of the city slums, the victims of hard social conditions, make their appearance in our Literature.

I have been aware how impossible it is to make such a review of the conditions of life complete; and how, in the necessary limitations of such a work as this, one cannot hope even to approach completeness. But, spite of their incompleteness, these suggestions may help the student to appreciate the sources and the relations of the greater, more serious works of our poets, novelists, historians, essayists, and orators, during these eventful years.

QUESTIONS

What dates include the Period of the Later Nineteenth Century? How did the rapid growth of population affect Literature? What were some of the influences which helped the wide diffusion of intelligence? Why should the Sunday-school be reckoned as one of these? What was the first monthly magazine? What are some of the more important epochs in the development of the modern American magazine? What were the "Annuals"? What were the first colleges to be established? What was the special influence upon education of Horace Mann? What new forms of institutions for higher education arose during this period? What influence had the scientific movement upon the national mind? Analyze the movement called Transcendentalism. In what sense was it reactionary? What was the Brook Farm experiment? What were some of the literary tendencies of Transcendentalism? Give some account of the antislavery movement. What are some of the characteristics of the religious life of this period? What social problems affect our Literature?



R.Waldo Emerson

CHAPTER IX

PERIOD OF THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1850-1880

VERSE—THE NEW ENGLAND POETS

THE best-known name among the “Transcendentalists” is that of Ralph Waldo Emerson. With Thoreau, A. B. Alcott, and Hawthorne, he has made the little town of Concord, Massachusetts, a classic spot for all who love American thought and American letters. His life is too uneventful to afford materials for a very extended biographical notice. Descended from a family of “ministers,” he began life in that profession. He early found, however, that the freer conditions of the lecturer and writer were better adapted to him, and, resigning his pastoral charge, he made his home in Concord, where he lived a beautiful, blameless life, an example of the plain living and high thinking which he taught. The events of his career are purely scholastic and literary. He was not by any means a recluse. He was conscientious in discharging his political and social duties at Concord, and the antislavery contest aroused his warm sympathies, so that he even at one time delivered some campaign addresses in a Massachusetts state election. But his days, on the

Ralph Waldo
Emerson,
born in Mas-
sachusetts,
1803; died,
1882.

whole, passed quietly and uneventfully. A journey to England in 1833, where he met Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Carlyle; the writing of a poem which was sung at Concord bridge, and the anonymous publication of "Nature" in 1836; the delivery of an address on "The American Scholar" at Harvard in 1837; the organization of the "Symposium," or "Transcendental Club," and the founding of "The Dial," the journal of Transcendentalism, in 1840; the publication of a volume of poems in 1878; the publication of successive volumes of lectures and essays,—these are the events of his career.

It is very difficult to clearly define Emerson's influence. Very few followed him, in the sense of accepting his theories as their own. There was never any apparent effort in any of his work to persuade or convince any one. In this respect his prose is as poetic as his verse. His influence was by way of inspiration. Those who could not clearly understand his meaning could yet feel his power, and it was a power tending toward intellectual freedom and spiritual aspiration. His method, so far as he can be said to have had a method, was the statement of the truth he felt, and its illustration from nature and from the works of the great writers of the past. He was mystical, in the sense that he believed in the present actual communion of the human spirit with the divine. He was accused of pantheism; but he could probably be successfully defended against the charge of being committed to any "ism." His conception of the relation of the human soul to the

Divine Being, and of "soul" to all in nature, is very difficult, if not impossible, to define in philosophical terms. He wrote

The rounded world is fair to see,
Nine times folded in mystery,

and he would probably have felt that any attempt to explain the mystery is futile. But he felt the power of nature upon the spirit of man, and he so expressed the feeling that his readers are compelled to feel it too. His message was one of the power of the spiritual,—of the worth of the invisible; and it would be difficult to exaggerate the value of such a message so delivered, in the midst of the material progress and the mad rush for wealth of the past generation.

Emerson's verse has little variety of form. The great bulk of it is written in an irregular iambic tetrameter. The irregularities are generally, however, musical in their effect. The longer poems are marred by too great a proportion of philosophic thought. They are sometimes difficult to understand. A poem may have depths of meaning which years of study would not sound, and be therefore the better poem. But to be a good poem there must be an obvious meaning which any intelligent reader can appreciate, and from which he can go on to the study of the deeper meanings. Here Emerson's poetry seems sometimes to fail. In the shorter pieces, however, and in many passages of the longer, he has reached a condensed, clear, powerful expression

of poetical ideas, which is unsurpassed. Take, for instance, the little poem sung at the celebration of the anniversary of the battle of Concord in 1836, and now carved on the pedestal of the statue of the Minuteman at Concord bridge :

By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The foe long since in silence slept ;
Alike the conqueror silent sleeps ;
And Time the ruined bridge has swept
Down the dark stream which seaward creeps.

On this green bank, by this soft stream,
We set to-day a votive stone ;
That memory may their deed redeem
When, like our sires, our sons are gone.

Spirit, that made those heroes dare
To die, and leave their children free,
Bid Time and Nature gently spare
The shaft we raise to them and Thee.

There could scarcely be a better example than this of condensed force. Many a young writer would have expanded the topic into a long poem and not said half so much. Notice especially the last couplet of the first stanza, —

Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.

The one long word "embattled" puts the fight before us, and the terse monosyllables of the last line hit the mind like bullets. The story of the

immeasurable results following from our war of independence is all suggested in that compact line, and it fastens itself upon the memory with a grip that is hard to shake off. As a very different example, but one equally clear and strong in its expression of beautiful poetic ideas, take

THE RHODORA;

ON BEING ASKED, WHENCE IS THE FLOWER?

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
 I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods,
 Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
 To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
 The purple petals, fallen in the pool,
 Made the black water with their beauty gay ;
 Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
 And court the flower that cheapens his array.
 Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
 This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
 Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
 Then Beauty is its own excuse for being :
 Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
 I never thought to ask, I never knew :
 But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
 The selfsame Power that brought me there brought you.

Emerson's independence of form, and at the same time his mastery of its essentials, are strikingly shown in this. It is near the length of the sonnet; and we may wonder why he did not put it into that form. Perhaps the slight condensation that would have been required might have improved the poem. Perhaps if Emerson had tried it the poem would have been spoiled; and that is the more probable

supposition. There is one line very perfect in alliteration and assonance :

The purple petals, fallen in the pool.

There is one in which a sudden break in the metre adds greatly to the effect :

Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing.

There is something exquisitely tender in the intrusion of that little word "dear." It seems to champion the flower against rude questioning, and to bring the reader and the poet into sympathy, real fellow-feeling, with nature ; and the following line :

Then Beauty is its own excuse for being,

is one of those strong, terse, musical statements of eternal truth, which make the distinction of Emerson's work. Nearer to his prose style, yet clear enough to be intelligible to any intelligent, thoughtful reader, is another little poem, one of the very few examples of Emerson's use of blank verse.

DAYS¹

Daughters of Time, the hypocritic Days,
 Muffled and dumb, like barefoot dervishes,
 And marching single in an endless file,
 Bring diadems and fagots in their hands.
 To each they offer gifts after his will,
 Bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all.
 I, in my pleached garden, watched the pomp,
 Forgot my morning wishes, hastily
 Took a few herbs and apples, and the Day
 Turned and departed silent. I, too late,
 Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

¹ Copyright 1857, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

There is a world of thought suggested by the words, "Forgot my morning wishes," of the hopes, plans, purposes for better things, which so often fade away as life goes on. The contrast between what we might get out of life and what we do is given in the "diadems and fagots offered," the glory and the consecration of self-sacrifice possible, and the few "herbs and apples," the material pleasures so often preferred. The pause in the last line but one—

and the Day
Turned and departed silent—

prepares for the conclusion,

I, too late,
Under her solemn fillet saw the scorn.

Perhaps the simplest, and at the same time the fullest, expression in brief form of Emerson's message to his generation, is in the often-quoted lines from "Voluntaries":

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When Duty whispers low, *Thou must*,
The youth replies, *I can*.

These lines express the high possibilities of human nature, realized through the fact of the nearness of man to God. A special interest is given to them by the circumstance related in connection with the dedication of the memorial to Colonel Robert G. Shaw, that they were occasioned by his acceptance of the command of the Fifty-fourth Regiment of Massachusetts troops.

Of the longer poems, "The Problem," "Wood-

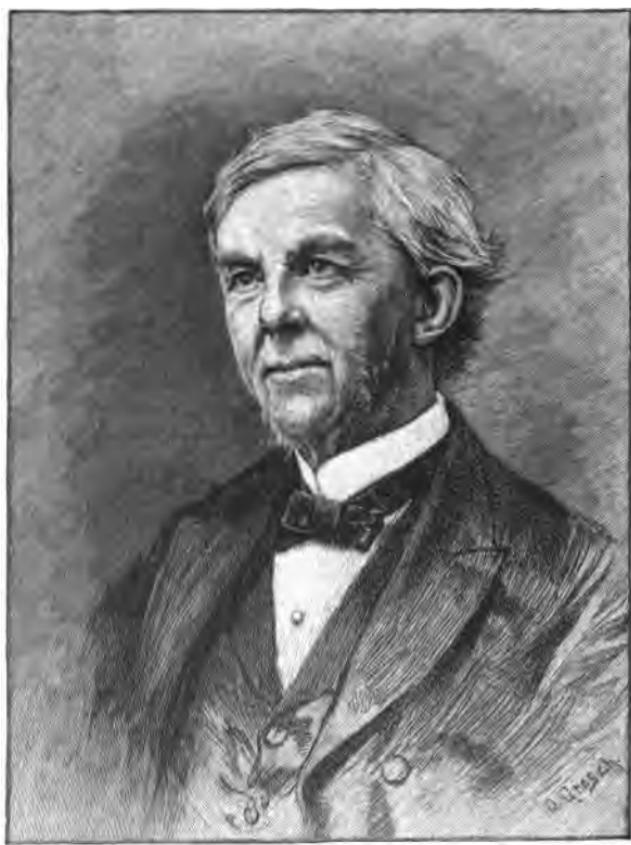
notes," and "May Day," are among the most "accessible," so to speak, for the student. "The World Soul" and "Initial, Dæmonic, and Celestial Love" are among the most difficult. The most difficult will well repay study, and abound in passages which are suggestive and intelligible to any one. Thus from the close of "The World Soul":

Spring still makes spring in the mind,
When sixty years are told;
Love wakes anew this throbbing heart,
And we are never old.
Over the winter glaciers,
I see the summer glow,
And, through the wild-piled snowdrift,
The warm rose-buds below.

The Cam-
bridge
Group.

Leaving the consideration of Emerson's "Essays," and of the other writers who with him constitute the "Concord" literary group, for the present, we pass to the neighboring town of Cambridge, and begin the study of the remarkable group of poets connected with it during this period.

Harvard College, the first established institution of collegiate training in this country, was also a leader in the University movement, spoken of in the preceding chapter. Thus it became an increasingly important centre of thought and culture, and naturally gathered about it a company of scholars and writers, among whom three poets stand out preëminent. They are Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and James Russell Lowell. They were not all born in Cambridge, nor did they all live there all their lives; but they are



Oliver Wendell Holmes.

closely associated with the town in a variety of ways, and are properly grouped together as "The Cambridge Poets."

Oliver Wendell Holmes was the child of the pastor of the old Cambridge Congregational Church. He was graduated from Harvard in the class of 1829; and has introduced many of his readers to this class by the many references to it in his poems. He studied medicine in Paris, and held the professorship of anatomy and physiology, first at Dartmouth, and afterwards, for the greater part of his life, at Harvard. For most, if not all, this later period his residence was in Boston. He was always known as Dr. Holmes; and not only performed the duties of his professorship enthusiastically, but published a number of scientific medical essays and volumes. Certain lines of thought, due to his medical studies, run through all his works. Few men have shown such versatile talents as has Holmes. His three novels are among the brightest, most cleverly written stories by any American author. His "Autocrat" series of essays holds a yet higher place; and probably "The Autocrat" itself will hold first rank in American works of its kind, if, indeed, there are any other of its kind.

Oliver
Wendell
Holmes,
born in Mas-
sachusetts,
1809; died,
1894.

As a poet, in which character we study him now, he combines humor and pathos as does no other American, and in some of his poems unites, to a remarkable degree, strong and suggestive thought with delicate beauty of expression.

His life was quiet and uneventful. His home

was in Boston, and his professional work in the Harvard Medical College, almost all his days. He travelled in Europe, in the later years of his life, and recorded the experiences of the journey in a delightful volume called "Our Hundred Days in Europe." He was conservative in his political and social views; and never joined the antislavery movement. But he was radical in his religious opinions; and his work is sometimes marred by the undue prominence of theological controversy. In an interesting letter to James Russell Lowell, in the early years of his manhood, he defends himself for not taking part in the political and social efforts in which his friends were so much engaged; and he held quite consistently to the principles of this letter throughout his career. According to the testimony of his friends, he was a man of the most genial, lovable, and likeable personal characteristics. Mr. T. W. Higginson says that of all men he ever knew, Holmes was most like a fountain; constantly bubbling over with sweet feeling and bright thought.

His literary career was long, beginning with the publication of "Poetical Illustrations of the Atheneum Gallery of Paintings," in 1827, and ending with the issue of "Over the Teacups," in 1890. Sixty-three years of continuous production is a rare record. In the latter years of his life he occupied a unique position; the last of the great group of writers to which he belonged, a peculiar reverence was felt for him. His genial, accessible disposition

made the public feel nearer to him than it often does to men of his fame and powers. His intellect appeared to retain its freshness unimpaired; so that the public never ceased to expect something charming and helpful from his pen.

The work referred to above as his first publication was prepared in connection with two other writers, J. O. Sargent and Park Benjamin. His first volume of poems appeared in 1836. Editions, with poems written later, were published in 1846, 1849, 1850, 1862. The "Autocrat" series began with the first issue of "The Atlantic Monthly," November, 1857. "Elsie Venner," his first novel, and "Songs in Many Keys" were issued in 1861. "Humorous Poems," 1865; "The Guardian Angel," a novel, 1867; "Songs of Many Seasons," 1874; "A Mortal Antipathy," a novel, 1885; "Before the Curfew," 1888, are among the more important publications that followed.

For special study, in the poetry of Holmes, take, as our first selection, one of his earliest poems, which yet bids fair to hold its freshness of interest with the public as long as anything he has written.

THE LAST LEAF

"The Last Leaf."

I saw him once before,
As he passed by the door,
 And again
The pavement stones resound,
As he totters o'er the ground
 With his cane.

10

They say that, in his prime,
 Ere the pruning-knife of Time
 Cut him down,
 Not a better man was found
 By the Crier on his round
 Through the town.

15

But now he walks the streets,
 And he looks at all he meets
 Sad and wan,
 And he shakes his feeble head,
 That it seems as if he said,
 "They are gone."

20

The mossy marbles rest
 On the lips that he has prest
 In their bloom,
 And the names he loved to hear
 Have been carved for many a year
 On the tomb.

25

My grandmamma has said,—
 Poor old lady, she is dead
 Long ago,—
 That he had a Roman nose,
 And his cheek was like a rose
 In the snow.

35

But now his nose is thin,
 And it rests upon his chin
 Like a staff,
 And a crook is in his back,
 And a melancholy crack
 In his laugh.

40

I know it is a sin
 For me to sit and grin
 At him here ;
 But the old three-cornered hat,
 And the breeches, and all that,
 Are so queer !

45

And if I should live to be
The last leaf upon the tree
In the spring,—
Let them smile, as I do now,
At the old forsaken bough
Where I cling.

The charm of this poem is in its blending of humor and pathos. We see the grotesqueness of the figure, and at the same time we feel the sadness of it. The charm is elusive; but we may call attention to some of the elements which help to secure it. One point easily seen is the art with which the vanished youth of the old man is kept before the imagination. Through the present picture, which is simply quaint and queer, we see always the shadow of the gallant youth, strong, erect, handsome, loved, and loving, of years gone by. Another notable quality is the delicacy of the humor. The ludicrous aspects of the figure are clearly indicated; but the manner is never unsympathetic. In the fifth and sixth stanzas, the humor comes nearest to being broad; but the pathetic contrast between the two saves it from any trace of coarseness. In the third stanza the interpretation given to the palsied shake of the old man's head is a beautiful example of the art with which all through the poem we are kept on the trembling line between smiles and tears. At line 19 is a fine example of a well-selected adjective. The epithet "mossy" suggests in one word the many years during which the old man's life has been a lonely one. It suggests also the picture of the old-fashioned "God's acre,"

with all its sacred, sad, and peaceful associations. And at the same time, it alliterates with the word "marbles," and thus helps to make a smooth musical line. The closing stanza fixes the pathetic impression as the strongest in the poem by reminding us how to each of us it may be appointed to become "The last leaf upon the tree."

The kind of verse called "occasional," has been described as presenting peculiar difficulties to the poet. Holmes showed unusual facility in this sort of poetry. He was always in great demand for public gatherings of all sorts; and never failed to produce something which expressed the spirit of the occasion in musical verse, often with genuine wit, and not seldom with true poetic beauty. The Harvard class of '29 was peculiarly favored among college classes, in having Dr. Holmes for the poet of its frequent reunions. With the great multiplication of courses of study, and the general use of the elective system, the old-fashioned college class is becoming a part of ancient history. When forty or fifty men entered college together, all took the same studies, recited together three times daily for four years, and together received the same degree, there was a closeness of association which led to the formation of very tender ties. This was the normal condition of college life for the first seventy-five years of the present century. It is "gone like tenants that quit without warning, down the back entry of time." But Holmes has preserved a very precious part of the spirit of that life, in his delightful series of lyrics prepared for the re-

unions of his class. Study, as an example of this side of his genius, one written thirty years after his graduation, and called

“THE BOYS”¹

- Has there any old fellow got mixed with the boys ?
 If there has, take him out without making a noise.
 Hang the Almanac’s cheat and the Catalogue’s spite !
 Old Time is a liar ! We’re twenty to-night !
- 5 We’re twenty ! We’re twenty ! Who says we are more ?
 He’s tipsy,— young jackanapes !— show him the door !
 “Gray temples at twenty ?”— Yes ! *white* if we please ;
 Where the snowflakes fall thickest there’s ‘nothing can
 freeze !
- Was it snowing I spoke of ? Excuse the mistake !
- 10 Look close,— you will see not a sign of a flake !
 We want some new garlands for those we have shed,—
 And these are white roses in place of the red.
- We’ve a trick, we young fellows, you may have been told,
 Of talking (in public) as if we were old :—
- 15 That boy we call “Doctor,” and this we call “Judge” ;
 It’s a neat little fiction,— of course it’s all fudge.
- That fellow’s the “Speaker,”— the one on the right ;
 “Mr. Mayor,” my young one, how are you to-night ?
 That’s our “Member of Congress,” we say when we chaff ;
- 20 There’s the “Reverend” What’s his name ?— don’t make
 me laugh.
- That boy with the grave mathematical look
 Made believe he had written a wonderful book,
 And the ROYAL SOCIETY thought it was *true* !
 So they chose him right in,— a good joke it was too !
- 25 There’s a boy, we pretend, with a three-decker brain,
 That could harness a team with a logical chain ;
 When he spoke for our manhood in syllabled fire,
 We called him “The Justice,” but now he’s “The Squire.”

¹ Copyright, 1861, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith,—
 30 Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith ;
 But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
 Just read on his medal, " My country," " of thee " !

You hear that boy laughing? — You think he's all fun ;
 But the angels laugh, too, at the good he has done ;
 35 The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
 And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all !

Yes, we're boys, — always playing with tongue or with pen ;
 And I sometimes have asked, Shall we ever be men ?
 Shall we always be youthful, and laughing, and gay,
 40 Till the last dear companion drops smiling away ?

Then here's to our boyhood, its gold and its gray !
 The stars of its winter, the dews of its May !
 And when we have done with our life-lasting toys,
 Dear Father, take care of thy children, THE BOYS !

Thirty years after graduation most men are about fifty years of age, and so are beginning to feel as if they might some day be old. Holmes makes this lurking uneasiness the theme of the lyric, gayly denies that they are any older than when they graduated, and so secures the mingling of fun and grave suggestion in which he excels. The measure is anapestic, the swinging effect of which is well adapted to a convivial song. There are several allusions to his classmates, some of whom are men not unknown to fame. The " Reverend " of line 20 is probably Rev. James Freeman Clarke, a distinguished Boston minister, and a very intimate friend of Dr. Holmes. " That boy with the grave mathematical look," line 21, is Professor Benjamin Peirce, of Harvard, for a

long time the most distinguished mathematician in America. The boy "with the three-decker brain," line 25, is Benjamin R. Curtis, who had been a justice of the United States Supreme Court; but in 1857, two years before the writing of this poem, had resigned, and gone into private practice of the law. The "nice youngster of excellent pith," line 29, will probably be recognized at once as Rev. S. F. Smith, the author of "*My Country, 'tis of thee.*"

Probably if any of Holmes' poems endures to the immortality of the great, it will be "*The Chambered Nautilus.*" Eternal, precious truth, expressed in faultless form, this little lyric sings itself into the heart.

THE CHAMBERED NAUTILUS¹

This is the ship of pearl, which, poets feign,
 Sails the unshadowed main,—
 The venturous bark that flings
 On the sweet summer winds its purpled wings
 5 In gulfs enchanted, where the Siren sings,
 And coral reefs lie bare,
 Where the cold sea-maids rise to sun their streaming
 hair.

Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl ;
 Wrecked is the ship of pearl!
 10 And every chambered cell,
 Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
 As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
 Before thee lies revealed,—
 Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed !

¹ Copyright, 1861, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

15 Year after year beheld the silent toil
 That spread his lustrous coil ;
 Still, as the spiral grew,
 He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
 Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
 20 Built up its idle door,
 Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no
 more.

Thanks for the heavenly message brought by thee,
 Child of the wandering sea,
 Cast from her lap, forlorn !
 25 From thy dead lips a clearer note is born
 Than ever Triton blew from wreathéd horn !
 While on mine ear it rings,
 Through the deep caves of thought I hear a voice that
 sings : —

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
 30 . As the swift seasons roll !
 Leave thy low-vaulted past !
 Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
 Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
 Till thou at length art free,
 35 Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea !

Study this poem as an example of the meditative nature lyric. It is written with no apparent reference to any idea of its being sung. It is not a song in that sense. But it has the lyrical quality of emotion, in a quiet, peaceful, meditative form, somewhat after the manner of Wordsworth. It has also very clearly the lyrical quality of expressing the poet's personality. We are interested in what the writer thinks and feels about the shell, rather than in the shell itself. The thought and feeling are those of

the scholar and modern scientific thinker, rather than of the simple observer of nature. The poet is first reminded of the classical fables about the nautilus. Then his thought passes to the facts of the life of the shellfish, and beautifully personifying them, he proceeds to draw his lesson, making the observed facts of the animal's life the basis of a beautiful and suggestive analogy. The form of the lyric is interesting, especially for its close connection with the progress of the thought. Notice the structure of the stanzas. The measure is iambic, with lines of varied length. First a pentameter line, then two trimeters, two pentameters, a trimeter, and an alexandrine at the end. Each of the five stanzas is devoted to a clearly defined stage of the thought: the fabled fancies about the nautilus, the shell as it lies before the poet, the life that once occupied the now empty shell, the fact that it brings us a message, and the message that it brings. A closer study will show us that each line carries a complete thought, and that the longer and shorter lines are closely adapted to the thought they have to express. Especially noteworthy is the way in which the thought of each stanza culminates to its fullest expression in the long, sonorous alexandrine line with which it closes. The familiar expedients of alliteration and assonance are used in this poem, but not in such a way as to be conspicuous. Notice especially lines 4, 11, 19. The great beauty of the poem is in the pure, ennobling thought it contains, and the impression it leaves upon the spirit of the reader. The interest of the form

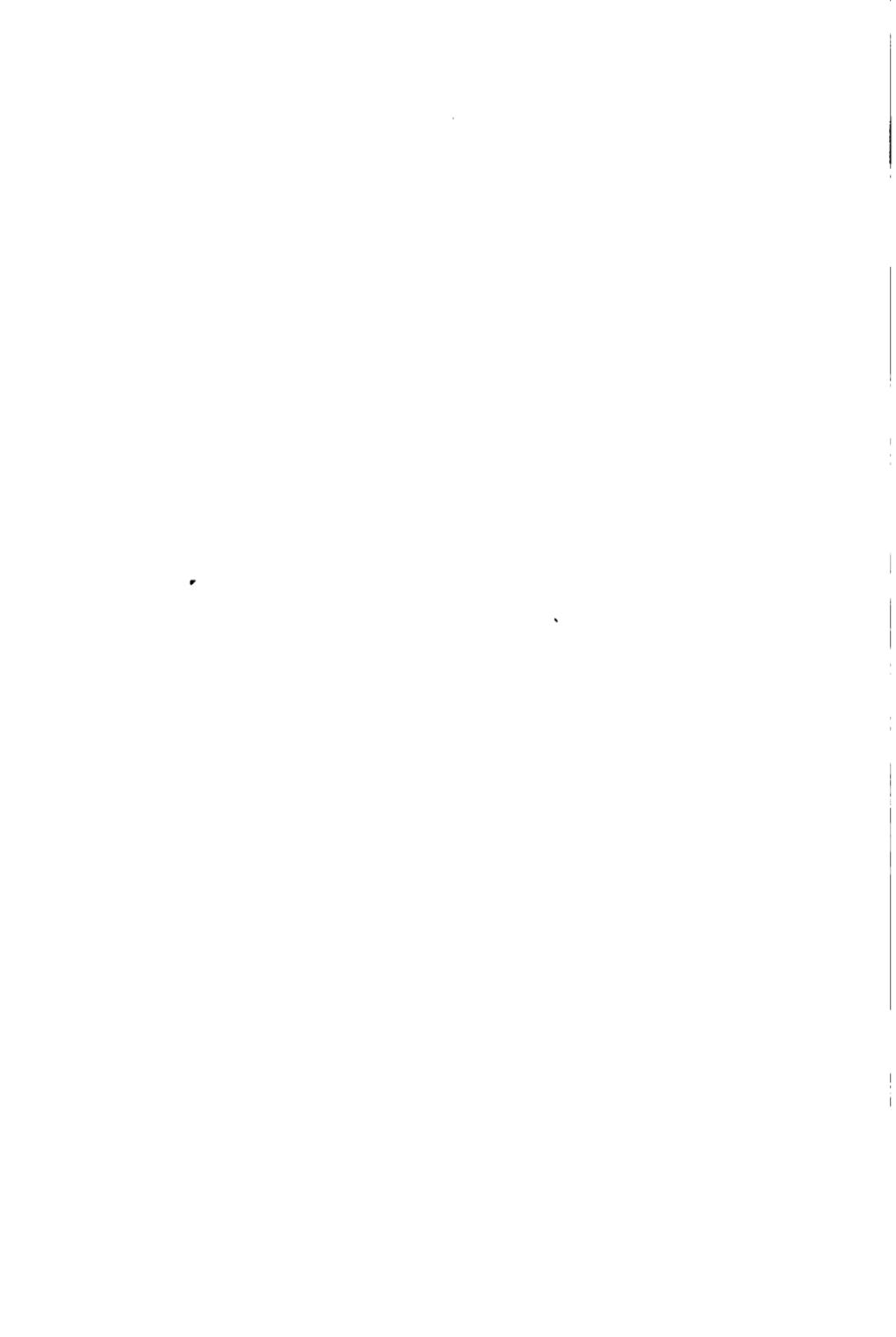
consists in the power with which each word and line is made to work toward this final impression.

The second member of the Cambridge group, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, was born in Portland, Maine. His father was a leading lawyer there, and his choice library was one of the strong influences in the poet's early training. The first book which greatly interested and so influenced him was Irving's "Sketch Book," which he read with keen delight when a boy of twelve. His college education was at Bowdoin, in Brunswick, Maine, where Nathaniel Hawthorne was one of his classmates. On his graduation in 1825, he was chosen professor of modern languages in his Alma Mater, with the suggestion that he spend some years abroad in special preparation for the duties of the chair. From May, 1826, until August, 1829, he was engaged in study and travel in Europe, and for the following five years he discharged the duties of the professorship at Bowdoin. In December, 1834, he was invited to a similar position at Harvard, and in preparation for this new work he went again to Europe. During this visit he suffered his first great sorrow—a sorrow reflected in the tender poem "The Footsteps of Angels"—in the death of his wife. In December, 1836, began his residence in Cambridge, which was his home for the remainder of his life. For eighteen years he was actively engaged in the duties of his professorship; but in 1854 he resigned this position, and devoted his whole time and strength to literary pursuits. From the year 1837 his home was in the historical "Craigie

Henry
Wadsworth
Longfellow,
born in Port-
land, Maine,
1807; died
in Cam-
bridge, Mas-
sachusetts,
1882.



Henry W. Longfellow



House," which had been the headquarters of General Washington during the siege of Boston, and which has thus become doubly memorable as the residence for forty-five years of the well-beloved poet. In July, 1861, a terrible domestic sorrow came to him in the death by fire of his second wife, with whom he had lived an ideally happy life since 1843. It was by means of the close and unremitting labor of his translation of Dante's "Divina Commedia" that he brought himself out of the overwhelming shadow of this calamity, a fact which adds a peculiar interest to that work, and to the series of sonnets which were written in connection with it. He died on the 24th of March, 1882, his mental faculties having been perfectly preserved to the end. "The Bells of San Blas," one of the most perfect of his lyrics, was completed on the 15th of the same month; and closes with words which seem beautifully appropriate as the last message of such a man and such a poet.

Like Holmes, Longfellow made his first appearance in print in connection with other writers. First on the list of his publications we find "Miscellaneous Poems from the United States Literary Gazette," 1826. During his residence at Bowdoin, he published "Elements of French Grammar"; "Coplas de Manrique," a translation from the Spanish; and "Outre-Mer," a collection of sketches, the gleanings of his years in Europe. After his return from his second journey abroad, he published, in the "Knickerbocker Magazine," his "Psalm of Life," which made him instantly one of the most popular

"Psalm of
Life," 1837.

poets of the world's history. Very few critics would give this poem a very high place, artistically. It has been criticised as commonplace in thought and confused in its figures of speech. Nevertheless the people read it; and boys and girls learned it by heart; and women were moved by it to bear trouble more patiently, to work harder, and keep a brighter outlook toward the future. For it too had "that music to whose tone the common pulse of man keeps time." Still Longfellow was not sure whether his special power would be found in verse or in prose; and the next volume he gave to the public was

"Hyperion."

"Voices of
the Night,"
1839.

"Hyperion," a book, half romance and half "glorified guide-book" of the Rhine and Switzerland. This was in 1839; and the same year appeared "Voices of the Night," his first volume of poems. This volume contained, besides the "Psalm of Life," the "Hymn to the Night," "The Reaper and the Flowers," "The Footsteps of Angels," and "The Beleaguered City"; lyrics which riveted his hold upon the hearts of his readers, and which display some of his most striking characteristics: a liquid fluency of versification, an art so perfect that it seems artless, a flavor of bookishness or evident familiarity with the writings of many lands and of all times, a transparent clearness of expression, a deep sense of the brooding presence of nature in our human lives, a serene faith in the best things, and perhaps too strong a tendency to press the lesson of his song upon the mind and heart of his reader. "Ballads and Other Poems" appeared in 1841, with "The Wreck of the Hespe-

"Ballads
and Other
Poems,"
1841.

rus" and "The Skeleton in Armor," which spirited ballads displayed quite another phase of his genius, and one to find frequent expression later; and containing also in "The Children of the Lord's Supper," his first effort at the use of the unrimed hexameter verse. A thin volume of "Poems on Slavery," in 1842, indicated where his sympathies lay on that subject, but did not specially add to his reputation; and in 1843 "The Spanish Student" appeared, his first essay at dramatic verse. "The Belfry of Bruges" and other poems, 1845, contained a number of lyrics, such as "The Old Clock on the Stairs" and "The Arrow and the Song," which have been great favorites. Then, in 1847, appeared the work which carried the name and fame of Longfellow into thousands of homes all over the English-speaking world. One of the pleasantest incidents in the history of literary friendships is told in connection with this poem, "Evangeline." Hawthorne had thought of the story of the expulsion of the Acadians, as suitable for a romance; but as he turned it over in his mind felt convinced that it was really better fitted to poetic treatment. So he suggested it to Longfellow; and when the poem appeared, no one welcomed it more heartily or rejoiced more in the fame it brought its author than did Hawthorne.

"Poems on
Slavery,"
1842.

"Evangeline," 1847.

"Kavanagh," a story in poetical prose, was published in 1849; and in 1850 another volume of miscellaneous poems, called "The Seaside and the Fireside." It contained "The Building of the Ship" and "Resignation."

"The Golden
Legend,"
1851.

"Christus,"
1872.

"The Golden Legend," published in 1851, was his second effort in dramatic verse, and showed a distinct advance upon the first. With "The New England Tragedies," 1868, and "The Divine Tragedy," 1871, this was republished in 1872, forming the trilogy, or threefold drama, "Christus." The thought of the trilogy seems to have been to portray the popular misconception or rejection of the Christ in three epochs of history. "The Divine Tragedy" is a versified dramatic rendering of the story of the Gospels, often reproducing the words of the evangelists with scarcely any change. "The Golden Legend" represents the Christianity of mediæval times, the superstition and the faith of the period being contrasted in the two leading characters. "The New England Tragedies" represents the same general thought, the scene being laid in the period of Puritanism, and especially the time of the witchcraft delusion.

"Hiawatha,"
1855.

In 1855 appeared "Hiawatha," a narrative poem, based on legends of the American Indians. It was instantly and widely popular. At the same time it was bitterly criticised, ridiculed, and frequently parodied. It is in many respects the most entirely American and original of Longfellow's works; and yet in connection with it he has been most frequently accused of plagiarism. There can be no doubt that for his materials he was largely indebted to Schoolcraft, and for the general form in which he cast them to his studies in Finnish poetry; but the poem is full of the spirit and the style of Longfellow. While the

stealing of literary work, the publishing of another's composition as our own, is one of the meanest of crimes, the use of materials, the reproduction of scenes and incidents from older writers, has been the constant practice of the best authors, and always will be. Chaucer's "Tales" and Shakespeare's dramas are all developed from older tales or plays, and the fact does not in the least detract from their originality. No one need hesitate to tell the tale of Hiawatha again, if he does not pretend that he invented it; and if he tells it in his own way, putting something of himself into it, it is his, as truly as it is Longfellow's. "Hiawatha" is written in a peculiar metre, an unrimed trochaic tetrameter. It is easy to imitate, but not easy to imitate well. Almost any one can string lines together which shall have the four accents; but to do it and avoid monotonous sing-song, to do it and keep a continuous musical movement in accordance with the thought, is a very different matter. That is what Longfellow did, and the parodies illustrate the beauty of the original, as counterfeit coin proves the value of the genuine. "The Courtship of Miles Standish," 1858, uses again the hexameter employed in "Evangeline," and has, what is very unusual in Longfellow, a delicate vein of humor mingling with the poetic beauty of its pictures.

Five years later "The Tales of a Wayside Inn" appeared. This is the last experiment in style, so to speak, and perhaps the most successful of all. It was not a new idea, but one older than Chaucer,

"The Courtship of Miles Standish,"
1858.

"Tales of a
Wayside
Inn," 1863.

the grouping of a number of narrative poems by putting them in the mouths of persons who by some device are brought together and made to tell the stories to one another, one story thus forming a "frame," in which the others are set. The "Canterbury Tales" of Chaucer occurs to us at once as the most famous example of the method. Longfellow's use of it is as different from that of Chaucer as Chaucer's is from that of Boccaccio, who used a similar device in the "Decameron." A company of six friends are at a wayside inn in Sudbury, Massachusetts, and each of the six, with the landlord of the inn, tells a tale. The characters of The Landlord, The Student, The Spanish Jew, The Sicilian, The Musician, The Theologian, and The Poet are individualized, and each tells a tale suited to his character. A second and third series of the "Tales" appeared in "Three Books of Song," 1871, and "Aftermath," 1872. "Flower de Luce," 1866, was a thin volume of lyrics. The translation of Dante's "Divina Commedia" was issued in 1867, the "Inferno" having been separately published two years before. The volume called "The Masque of Pandora," 1875, contained also "The Hanging of the Crane," a much more popular poem, and "Morituri Salutamus," one of Longfellow's very few "occasional" poems. It was written for the fiftieth anniversary of his graduation from Bowdoin. "Keramos," 1878, "Ultima Thule," 1880, "In the Harbor," 1882, and "Michael Angelo," 1883, complete the list, the last two being published after his death.

Longfellow's work illustrates the three main divisions of verse: the Epic—or Narrative, the Dramatic, and the Lyric. We will study something of each style; and first a passage from the second Part of "Evangeline."

- Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades;
and before them
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.
Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus
5 Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.
Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,
And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands,
Fragrant and thickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,
Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.
10 Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.
Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,
Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,
Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.
Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
15 Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grape-vine
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,
Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.
20 Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.

Nearer and ever nearer, among the numberless islands,
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,

- Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.
- 25 Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver.
At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,
- 30 Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.
Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,
But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos,
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows,
All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were the sleepers,
- 35 Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.
After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,
As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician !
- 40 Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition ?
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit ?"
Then, with a blush, she added, "Alas for my credulous fancy !
Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."
- 45 But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he answered, —
"Daughter, thy words are not idle ; nor are they to me without meaning.
Feeling is deep and still ; and the word that floats on the surface
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is hidden.
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illusions.

- 50 Gabriel truly is near thee ; for not far away to the southward,
On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of St. Maur and
St. Martin.
There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her
bridegroom,
There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheep-
fold.
Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit trees ;
55 Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the bluest of heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.
They who dwell there have named it ‘the Eden of Louisiana.’”

This extract is from the central incident of the poem, the unconscious meeting and passing of Gabriel and Evangeline, which has been spoken of as among the most pathetic passages in Literature. Notice the contrast between the dreamy, slow, slumberous effect of the lines describing the arrival of Evangeline's company at the island where they stop to rest, and the swift passing of Gabriel's boat. Lines 13 and 23 illustrate this most perfectly. One is compelled to read the first deliberately, pausing after almost every word, while the other slips over the tongue as lightly as the motion of the canoe. Notice the music of line 3 when it is read aloud. The liquid *l*'s and *r*'s float and rock like the flowers on the still waters of the bayou. Notice the effect of the repeated *o* sounds in lines 5 and 6. Alliteration is most effectively used in lines 13 and 16. Notice also how beautifully the scene and Evangeline's soul are blended in the passage, lines 14–21. In this poem Longfellow has come as near to success in the use of the hexameter

line as in any of his work. If one would test the question whether he has really succeeded, a simple method would be this: try how often the lines could be divided into two trimeters without injury to the thought or to the music. A line should have a certain unity of impression both in thought and rhythm. Not that the thought should always end with the line. If every line were a complete sentence, the monotonous effect would be intolerable; and even such a unity as that of Pope, where each couplet is a complete clause, becomes tiresome. It is far better to have the thought carried over occasionally from one line to the next. But remembering this limitation, the test of unity of line may be safely applied. On applying this test to these lines, you will soon find that they cannot often be divided without distinct loss. Sometimes it seems as if they could; but experiment shows that the trimeter arrangement gives a sing-song effect which the hexameter avoids. Take, for example, line 6:

Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms.
If this were divided into two trimeter lines, the division would fall at the end of the word "odorous"; thus:

Faint was the air with the odorous
Breath of magnolia blossoms."

With this arrangement one instinctively makes a slight pause at the end of the first line, instead of passing at once from the adjective to the noun; and the effect is bad, both for sound and for sense.

If the student is acquainted with the principles of Latin and Greek scansion, it would be interesting to read some lines from the "Æneid" or the "Iliad," and then from "Evangeline," and try by the test of the ear whether Longfellow has caught the secret of the classic hexameter cadences.

And as an example of Dramatic verse, take an extract from "The Golden Legend." It will be interesting also as an example of the irregular unrimed verse which Longfellow uses more than any other poet, and which has a peculiar charm of its own. The extract is from the first interview between Elsie and Prince Henry :

(Elsie comes in with flowers.)

Elsie. Here are flowers for you,
But they are not all for you.
Some of them are for the Virgin
And for Saint Cecilia.

Prince Henry. As thou standest there,
Thou seemest to me like the angel
That brought the immortal roses
To Saint Cecilia's bridal chamber.

Elsie. But these will fade.

Prince Henry. Themselves will fade,
But not their memory,
And memory has the power
To re-create them from the dust.
They remind me, too,
Of martyred Dorothea,
Who from celestial gardens sent
Flowers as her witnesses
To him who scoffed and doubted.

Elsie. Do you know the story
Of Christ and the Sultan's daughter?
That is the prettiest legend of them all.

Prince Henry. Then tell it to me.
 But first come hither.
 Lay the flowers down beside me,
 And put both thy hands in mine.
 Now tell me the story.

Elsie. Early in the morning
 The Sultan's daughter
 Walked in her father's garden,
 Gathering the bright flowers,
 All full of dew.

Prince Henry. Just as thou hast been doing
 This morning, dearest Elsie.

Elsie. And as she gathered them,
 She wondered more and more
 Who was the Master of the Flowers,
 And made them grow
 Out of the cold, dark earth.
 "In my heart," she said,
 "I love him; and for him
 Would leave my father's palace,
 To labor in his garden."

Prince Henry. Dear, innocent child !
 How sweetly thou recallest
 The long-forgotten legend,
 That in my early childhood
 My mother told me !
 Upon my brain
 It reappears once more,
 As a birthmark on the forehead
 When a hand suddenly
 Is laid upon it, and removed !

Elsie. And at midnight,
 As she lay upon her bed,
 She heard a voice
 Call to her from the garden,
 And, looking forth from her window,
 She saw a beautiful youth
 Standing among the flowers.
 It was the Lord Jesus;
 And she went down to him,

And opened the door for him ;
And he said to her, "O maiden !
Thou hast thought of me with love,
And for thy sake
Out of my Father's kingdom
Have I come hither :
I am the Master of the Flowers.
My garden is in Paradise,
And if thou wilt go with me,
Thy bridal garland
Shall be of bright red flowers."
And then he took from his finger
A golden ring,
And asked the Sultan's daughter
If she would be his bride.
And when she answered him with love,
His wounds began to bleed,
And she said to him,
"O Love ! how red thy heart is,
And thy hands are full of roses."
"For thy sake," answered he,
"For thy sake is my heart so red,
For thee I bring these roses ;
I gathered them at the cross
Whereon I died for thee !
Come, for my Father calls.
Thou art my elected bride !"
And the Sultan's daughter
Followed him to his Father's garden.

Prince Henry. Wouldst thou have done so, Elsie ?

Elsie. Yes, very gladly.

Prince Henry. Then the Celestial Bridegroom
Will come for thee also.

Upon thy forehead he will place,
Not his crown of thorns,
But a crown of roses.
In thy bridal chamber,
Like Saint Cecilia,
Thou shalt hear sweet music,
And breathe the fragrance

Of flowers immortal !
Go now and place these flowers
Before her picture.

The lines are of irregular lengths, and there is no rime; but the music is perfect. There is not a limping line. The sense and the sound are beautifully blended. Read it with thoughts entirely fixed upon what is said, and you will irresistibly fall into the rhythm of the verse. It may seem very simple to write thus, with no rime, and constantly varying the length of the lines; but to do this and yet have the rhythmic movement perfect, and each line itself a perfect one is a triumph of art. The sweet simplicity and clear faith of Elsie appear clearly in this passage; and so does the amiable weakness of the Prince, easily turned into cruel selfishness, and yet capable of receiving the influence of Elsie's strength, and so of being redeemed. In the clearness and force with which these characteristics appear in the words and actions of the persons, the dramatic quality of the poem is shown. In other parts of this poem, rime is used freely and with the ease and melody characteristic of all Longfellow's work. There is a good deal of variety of scene and action. Elsie offers herself as the victim by whose voluntary death the health of the Prince is to be restored. The Prince accepts the offering, and they journey together through Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, to Salerno, where the sacrifice is to be accomplished. An interesting interlude is a very pretty imitation of an ancient miracle play. Lucifer and

good and bad angels are introduced. At the last the Prince refuses to accept the sacrifice, and so, as becomes a legend rather than a tragedy, the end is happy. It is not an acting play, nor is it a powerful drama of passion; but it is a beautiful legend in dramatic form.

In studying Longfellow's lyric work, take one of the earliest poems, and notice some of the qualities which gave him his peculiar popularity.

HYMN TO THE NIGHT

'Ασταστη, τριλλιστος

I heard the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

5 I felt her presence, by its spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

10 I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

15 From the cool cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose;
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there,
From those deep cisterns flows.

20 O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before!
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best-beloved Night!

In form this lyric is very simple, and yet, on examination, shows a delicately elaborate art. The quatrains are formed of alternating pentameter and trimeter lines, with iambic feet. The measure is very melodious, the variations from the iambic scheme being just enough to avoid monotony: as is illustrated in lines 2 and 8. This easy, flowing melody of versification is the first notable "Longfellow" quality. In each of the first three stanzas the word "Night" is used, and determines the rime-scheme. In the second part of the lyric, the word "air," in the fourth stanza, gives the dominant tone of the riming. The figure of speech which pervades the whole poem is personification; and in the development of this figure, dignity, simplicity, and poetic appropriateness are the striking qualities, more than originality or force. Notice how this figure is developed at lines 2, 3, 6, 19. A characteristic quality of Longfellow's work, which to some seems a special charm, and to others a weakness, is that which has been spoken of as the "flavor of bookishness." It is the strong tendency to make allusions and references to characters, incidents, and sayings from the wide range of his reading. It is illustrated in lines 12 and 21 of this selection. Finally, notice the expression of the brooding presence of the Night, and the peace it brings to the



I. Hawke

human spirit. The test of this poem, as of all lyric poetry, is in the power with which the feeling of the poet is carried to the mind of the reader.

Just a pleasant walk up Brattle Street, Cambridge, from the "Craigie House," brings one to "Elmwood," for many years the home of another of the Cambridge group, James Russell Lowell. His father, Rev. Charles Lowell, was almost all his life pastor of one of the Boston churches, but made his home in Cambridge. When the poet graduated from Harvard, in 1838, he illustrated the force of heredity, as his father and grandfather had taken the same degree from the same Alma Mater. His class poem, recited and published in that year, is reckoned as first in the order of his works; though it is not included in the authorized edition of his poems. The same fate has overtaken the volume called "A Year's Life," issued in 1841, which has never been republished, and the most of whose contents were suppressed by the critical judgment of the author. The class poem had contained ridicule of the abolitionists, who were then beginning to attract public attention. But Lowell's maturer thought brought him into close sympathy with those earnest men, and his marriage with Maria White, in 1844, strengthened this tendency by combining these political and social aims with the deepest affections and the highest ideals of his life. He found it somewhat difficult to settle upon a profession, studying law, and beginning to engage in its practice; but feeling always that his heart was divided between political and social reform

James
Russell
Lowell,
born in
Cambridge,
Massachu-
setts, 1819;
died, 1891.

on the one hand, and Literature on the other. He was a contributor to the "Liberty Bell," the "Anti-slavery Standard," and the "Boston Courier." In 1843 he was appointed editor of a magazine called "The Pioneer." Such an editor, and such contributors as Poe, Hawthorne, Mrs. Browning, and Whittier, should have made any magazine successful; but it lived through only three numbers. In 1851 he travelled in Europe; and, in 1853, experienced the great sorrow of the death of his wife. In 1855 he was appointed to succeed Longfellow as professor of modern languages and "belles-lettres" at Harvard; and spent two years abroad in special study with reference to the duties of that position. The "Atlantic Monthly" was founded in 1857 with Lowell as its chief editor. From 1863 to 1872 he was associated with Charles Eliot Norton in the management of the "North American Review." Meanwhile his writings had brought him before the public as an independent supporter of the principal measures of the Republican party; and in 1876 he was one of their presidential electors. In 1877 he was appointed by President Hayes to the Spanish Mission, and in 1880 was transferred to England. Here he remained till 1885, gaining great reputation as an orator on social and ceremonial occasions, and doing much in this way to bring the American and British peoples together. Lowell was keenly sensible of the evils which at different periods have been prominent in American social and political life. He was severe and unsparing in his denunciation of

some forms of corruption; and thus, like Cooper, suffered a loss of popularity by his faithfulness in this respect. During the later years of his life he made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Burnett, of Southboro, Massachusetts, but spent a great deal of his time in England. He died in Cambridge, August 12, 1891.

Lowell's poetical works fall into two clearly marked groups, separated by an interval of fourteen years. The first group begins with the class poem of 1838, and ends with the "Fable for Critics," in 1848; the second group begins with the second series of "The Biglow Papers," the first number of which appeared in the "Atlantic Monthly," January, 1862 (the whole second series was published in 1866), and closes with "Heartsease and Rue," 1888, and a little volume of last poems issued since his death.

Lowell's ideal of what a poet should be he himself ridicules in the "Fable for Critics":

There is Lowell, who's striving Parnassus to climb
 With a whole bale of *isms* tied together with rhyme,
 He might get on alone, spite of brambles and boulders,
 But he can't with that bundle he has on his shoulders,
 The top of the hill he will ne'er come nigh reaching
 Till he learns the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching;
 His lyre has some chords that would ring pretty well,
 But he'd rather by half make a drum of the shell,
 And rattle away till he's old as Methusalem,
 At the head of a march to the last New Jerusalem.

His serious statement of the ideal, which in these lines he whimsically ridicules, will be found in the

"Ode," which is among the earliest poems in the collected edition.

Among the toil-worn poor my soul is seeking
 For one to bring the Maker's name to light,
 To be the voice of that almighty speaking
 Which every age demands to do it right.

* * * * * * *

Who feels that God and Heaven's great deeps are nearer
 Him to whose heart his fellow-man is nigh,
 Who doth not hold his soul's own freedom dearer
 Than that of all his brethren, low or high ;

* * * * * * *

This, this is he for whom the world is waiting
 To sing the beatings of its mighty heart,
 Too long hath it been patient with the grating
 Of scranneI-pipes, and heard it misnamed Art.

* * * * * * *

Awake, then, thou ! we pine for thy great presence
 To make us feel the soul once more sublime,
 We are of far too infinite an essence
 To rest contented with the lies of Time.
 Speak out ! and lo ! a hush of deepest wonder
 Shall sink o'er all this many-voicëd scene,
 As when a sudden burst of rattling thunder
 Shatters the blueness of a sky serene.

Lowell's earlier volumes contain as their most important narrative poem, "A Legend of Brittany," which scarcely seems to be an effort to reach this ideal. It is a beautiful poem, written in pentameter lines which rime alternately, and arranged in eight-line stanzas. The story is a sad one of crime and sin, but contains the immortal lesson of the invincible power of purity and truth. Two powerful historical poems belong to this time: "A Glance Behind the Curtain," which seizes upon the moment

when Cromwell almost decided to leave England and join the Puritans in America, and makes from it a powerful plea for true patriotism; and "Columbus," which treats in a similar way the moment when the explorer was given "one day more" to accomplish his aim.

But the chief poem of this earlier period, and one of the most important of Lowell's works, is "The Vision of Sir Launfal." In this poem Lowell used the theme of the search for the Holy Grail, which Tennyson has made so familiar to lovers of poetry, in "The Idylls of the King." The American poet developed the story in his own way. Indeed, the story, so far as I know, is entirely his own; and there is no apparent effort to give a mediæval atmosphere. It is frankly ethical; the inspiring lessons reach the soul, in every part of the poem; but it is not didactic, in an inartistic sense; that is, the lesson teaches itself, and is not forced. Some of the best passages are descriptive of nature. With the older English poets, May is the beautiful month of the year, and there has been a conventional fashion of giving May, in America, the same qualities which the poets ascribe to it in England. But Lowell is not conventional. He knows that in New England June is the most beautiful month of the year; and the New England June has been described once for all in the opening part of "Sir Launfal."

"Sir
Launfal,"
1845.

And what is so rare as a day in June?

Then, if ever, come perfect days;

Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune,
 And over it softly her warm ear lays :
 5 Whether we look, or whether we listen,
 We hear life murmur, or see it glisten ;
 Every clod feels a stir of might,
 An instinct within it that reaches and towers,
 And, groping blindly above it for light,
 10 Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers ;
 The flush of life may well be seen
 Thrilling back over hills and valleys ;
 The cowslip startles in meadows green,
 The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
 15 And there's never a leaf nor a blade too mean
 To be some happy creature's palace ;
 The little bird sits at his door in the sun,
 Atilt like a blossom among the leaves,
 And lets his illumined being o'errun
 20 With the deluge of summer it receives.

Notice how real it all is. The buttercup, the cowslip, the dandelion, the characteristic flowers of the New England fields, are the flowers of which he writes. How the warm glow of the June day pervades every line! There are lines here that well illustrate Lowell's gift of strong expression (see lines 8-10, 14, 19, 20). A passage of almost equal beauty is the prelude to Part Second of the poem, which describes that marvel of our American winter — a bright day following a frost storm when the winter wind

Had caught the nodding bulrush tops
 And hung them thickly with diamond drops,
 That crystallised the beams of moon and sun,
 And made a star of every one.

Lowell, indeed, comes near to the ideal of the "Ode," when the beggar with whom Sir Launfal

divides his crust, in “the voice that was calmer than silence,” said :

The Holy Supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need ;
Not what we give, but what we share, —
For the gift without the giver, is bare ;
Who gives himself with his alms feeds three, —
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and me.

According to the usual division of verse, it would be difficult to classify the “Fable for Critics.” In it Lowell’s strong tendency toward criticism finds expression in rime. We have already quoted it repeatedly. In connection with every name thus far mentioned, and with some who will be mentioned, it would be well for the student to see if they are discussed in the “Fable,” and if so, to read what Lowell has there to say.

“A Fable for Critics,”
1848.

Lowell’s most entirely original work, and the one that made the strongest impression on his contemporaries, was “The Biglow Papers.” It is a series of dialect poems, supposed to be composed by a rustic genius of New England, introduced and accompanied by a series of letters from his pastor, the Rev. Homer Wilbur. It was, first of all, a powerful political pamphlet. It attacked the men and the measures of the dominant party during the time of the Mexican War, and indirectly defended the abolitionists and other opponents of the war and of the annexation of Texas. The second series did the same service in behalf of the dominant party, and against the obstructionists and “peace” party, during

“The Biglow
Papers,”
1846.
1860.

the Civil War. While the political interest may be transitory, "The Biglow Papers" will always attract the student of Literature as a most effective character study; being Lowell's nearest approach to a dramatic poem. The supposed author and Parson Wilbur are distinguished with beautiful art, and the weaknesses of the opposite party are revealed with keen sarcasm. Another striking characteristic is the dialect. It may be that this will prevent its enduring popularity. Dialects are transitory, and perhaps the people of the future will not take the trouble to interpret the dialect of these poems. But scholars and literary men will always be especially interested in this feature. We may be sure that the poems have preserved the dialect, whatever effect the dialect may have upon the poems. Moreover, scattered through them there are examples of keen wit, stinging satire, and lovely description of nature. "What Mr. Robinson thinks," number three of the first series; parts of the "Third Letter from B. Sawin, Esq.," and "Jonathan to John," in the second series, are examples of the wit and satire. The following extract from "Sunthin' in the Pastoral Line," second series, is one of the most perfect expressions of the real New England atmosphere in Literature.

From SUNTHIN' IN THE PASTORAL LINE¹

BIGLOW PAPERS, SECOND SERIES, NUMBER SIX

I, country-born an' bred, know where to find
Some blooms thet make the season suit the mind,

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An' seem to metch the doubtin' blue-bird's notes,
 Half-vent'rin' liverworts in furry coats,
 5 Bloodroots, whose rolled-up leaves ef you oncurl,
 Each on 'em's cradle to a baby-pearl,—
 But these are jes' Spring's pickets ; sure ez sin,
 The rebble frosts'll try to drive 'em in ;
 For half our May's so awfully like May'n't,
 10 'Twould rile a Shaker or an evrige saint ;
 Though I own up I like our back'ard springs
 Thet kind o' haggle with their greens an' things,
 An' when you 'most give up, 'ithout more words
 Toss the fields full o' blossoms, leaves, an' birds :
 15 Thet's Northun natur', slow an' apt to doubt,
 But when it *doos* git stirred, ther's no gin-out!

Fust come the blackbirds clatt'rin' in tall trees,
 An' settlin' things in windy Congresses,—
 Queer politicians, though, for I'll be skinned
 20 Ef all on 'em dont head against the wind.
 'Fore long the trees begin to show belief,
 The maple crimsonos to a coral-reef,
 Then saffern swarms swing off from all the willers
 So plump they look like yaller caterpillars,
 25 Then gray hossches'nut's leetle hands unfold
 Softer'n a baby's be at three days old :
 Thet's robin-redbreast's almanick ; he knows
 Thet arter this there's only blossom snows ;
 So, choosin' out a handy crotch an' spouse,
 30 He goes to plast'rin' his adobe house.

Then seems to come a hitch,—things lag behind,
 Till some fine mornin' Spring makes up her mind,
 An' ez, when snow-swelled rivers cresh their dams
 Heaped-up with ice thet dovetails in an' jams,
 35 A leak comes spirtin' thru some pinhole cleft,
 Grows stronger, ficer, tears out right an' left,
 Then all the waters bow themselves an' come,
 Suddin, in one gret slope o' shedderin' foam,
 Jes' so our Spring gits everythin' in tune
 40 An' gives one leap from April into June.

The striking characteristics of this passage are similar to those noted in the extract from "Sir Launfal." There is a whole chapter of poetical botany in it and the immediately following lines; and there are some interesting hints at bird-lore; but it is all such knowledge as any sensitive, intelligent observer can obtain for himself. Lines 4-6 and 21-22 are examples of the perfect realism and delicate fancy with which the characteristic beauties of our spring blossoms are pointed out. Let the student search out others for himself. The dialect is admirably managed in this selection. It gives a racy, countrified flavor to the whole passage which greatly increases the effect. And if the dialect of "The Biglow Papers" is studied, with the guidance of the introduction to the second series, the study will amount to a respectable little course in the history of our language.

Some of Lowell's strongest work has been done in lyric poetry. Among the earlier poems no one more fully expresses the deepest soul of the poet than "The Present Crisis," and probably none has more deeply moved other men. It expresses the poet's ideal of progress, in thought and in reform. Written for a special crisis, it fits all crises, when the question is between old abuses and new reforms. It is full of lines that cling to the memory, and will always be quoted by those who are leading toward better things.

Though the cause of Evil prosper, yet 'tis Truth alone is strong,
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong.

* * * * *

Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne,—
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

* * * * *

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;

They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of
Truth;

Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate
winter sea,

Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

There is an inspiring march movement in these long trochaic lines. We feel as we read them that we are keeping step with the great army of progress who march "abreast with Truth"; and the strong thought is thus fitted with a strong expression. Lowell's later volumes include two extended meditative poems, full of suggestive thought: "Under the Willows," and "The Cathedral." But it is the judgment of many critics that he reached the highest point of his poetical career in the "Harvard Commemoration Ode," written in 1865, in honor of the graduates and students of Harvard University who had given their lives in the Civil War. It is probably the noblest ode in American Literature, and for eloquent expression of noble thoughts distinguished among all such compositions.

Take from the "Commemoration Ode" some

passages in the sixth strophe, in which the character of Lincoln is described.

- Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote :
- * * * * *
- 5 For him her Old World moulds aside she threw,
And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.
- * * * * *
- 10 They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill,
And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again and thrust.
His was no lonely mountain peak of mind,
- 15 Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,
A sea-mark now, now lost in vapors blind ;
Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined,
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind,
Yet also nigh to heaven and loved of loftiest stars.
- * * * * *
- 20 Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face.
- * * * * *
- He knew to bide his time,
And can his fame abide,
Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
Till the wise years decide.
- * * * * *
- 25 These all are gone, and, standing like a tower,
Our children shall behold his fame,
The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing man,
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
New birth of our new soil, the first American.¹

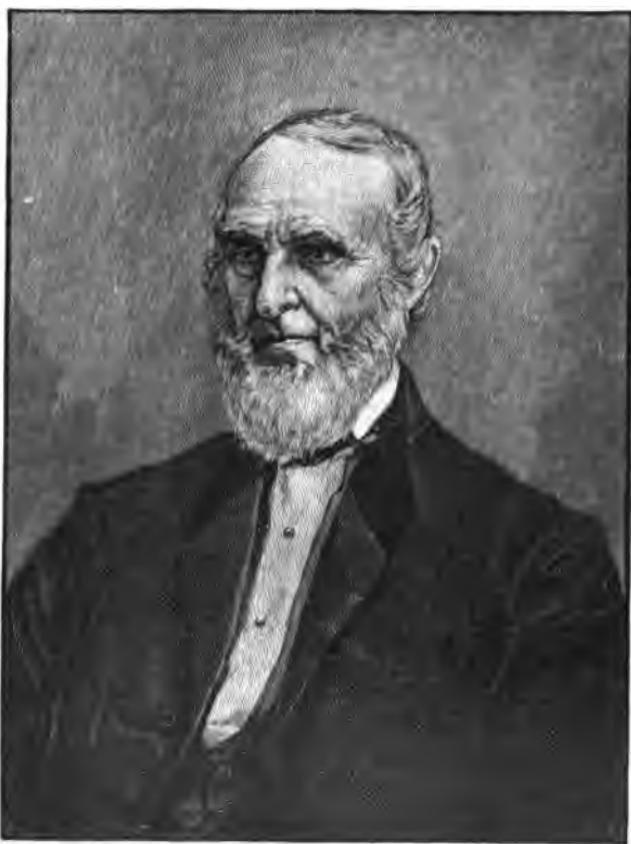
¹ Copyright, 1865, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

The metaphors and similes used here are notable for their freshness and force. See lines 5, 11–13, 17. The last, especially, is thoroughly American, and happily adapted to the circumstance that Lincoln came to the Presidency from the prairie state of Illinois. The epithets are especially suggestive, and well suited to the character they illustrate. Thus “supple-tempered will,” line 12; “level-lined,” line 17. There are a number of lines in this selection which are notable for their clear, strong expression of thought. Read lines 8, 19, 21, 28–30, and especially the closing line. In all of these the thought crowds the words full, and yet it is clearly uttered. This is the secret of effective writing. To say fully what is in your mind, yet not to use a word more than is needed, is the problem. Then the form of the sentence and the words chosen have much to do with the effect. We notice in these lines the sound effects we have noted so often. The last line is one of those rare phrases struck out in the glow of composition, which put into a very few words what many people have tried to say, but knew not how. It characterizes Lincoln, as no one else has succeeded in doing. That is the remarkable thing about this strophe of the ode. It gave within a few months of Lincoln’s death the judgment of posterity, as to his fame, not in general terms, but with a nice discrimination of the essential quality of his greatness.

Perhaps most truly American, and certainly most intensely “New England,” of the New England

John
Greenleaf
Whittier,
born in
Massachu-
setts, 1807;
died in New
Hampshire,
1892.

poets, was John Greenleaf Whittier. He was a farmer's boy, whose childhood was spent in the ordinary work of one of the hill farms of Massachusetts. His education was such as could be obtained in the district school, followed by a few interrupted terms in the academy, and some district school teaching, for which his academy studies were supposed to prepare him, supplemented by the very few books that could be found in his father's house. In these respects his life is sharply contrasted with the scholastic career of the other New England poets. A volume of Burns' poems, which came into his hands when he was fourteen years old, had much to do with his true education. The impulse to poetry came very early in life; and he began, when yet a lad, to send his verses to the papers. Some lines printed in the "Liberator" attracted the attention of William Lloyd Garrison, then its editor, and he sought out the young author, and encouraged him to give his pen to the cause of antislavery. Whittier's family were Friends, or Quakers; and the poet always retained his connection with that company of Christians. Thus he was by training, as well as by the natural tendency of his mind, inclined to take up the cause of the slave. In his early manhood he was actively engaged in political movements; but he saw that, if he was to be a successful agitator, he must give up hopes and plans for political preferment; and this sacrifice he deliberately made. At the same time he refused to follow Garrison in his rejection of all political action; but,



John G. Whittier

through others, was always ready to employ political methods for the furtherance of his cause. He was editor of "The American Manufacturer," in Boston, 1829; of "The Haverhill Gazette," in 1830; and, later, of "The New England Weekly Review," in Hartford, Connecticut. In 1836 he was secretary of the American Antislavery Society; and in 1838–1839 edited "The Pennsylvania Freeman," at Philadelphia. In 1840 he went to live at Amesbury, Massachusetts, and from this time till his death his history is simply the history of his poetry.

This falls into two divisions, very distinctly marked by the prevailing characteristics of the poems. The first division includes the poems written during the antislavery struggle, from 1831 to the close of the Civil War in 1865. The second includes those of his later years, the period of peace, extending from the publication of "Snowbound," in 1866, to the volume called "At Sundown," issued the year of his death, 1892. His earlier volumes contained some efforts to use the Indian legends as subjects for poems. They were moderately successful; but "Mogg Me-gone" and "The Bridal of Pennacook" made no such triumphant appeal to the reading public as did Longfellow's "Hiawatha." In "Cassandra Southwick," he has given us a beautiful ballad of the persecution of the Quakers by the Puritans, the persecution which resulted in the conversion of Whittier's ancestors to the doctrines of the Friends. But Whittier really found voice first in the volume called "Voices of Freedom," published in 1849. In

"Voices of
Freedom,"
1849.

the "Proem," dated 1847, he gives a little study of himself as a poet, which is remarkable for the calm critical justice with which he estimates his power and confesses his limitations.

PROEM

* * * * *

The rigor of a frozen clime,
 The harshness of an untaught ear,
 The jarring words of one whose rhyme
 Beat often Labor's hurried time,
 Or Duty's rugged march through storm and strife, are here.

Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
 No rounded art the lack supplies ;
 Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
 Or softer shades of Nature's face,
 I view her common forms with unanointed eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
 The secrets of the heart and mind ;
 To drop the plummet line below
 Our common world of joy and woe,
 A more intense despair or brighter hope to find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
 Of human right and weal is shown ;
 A hate of tyranny intense,
 And hearty in its vehemence,
 As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my own.

Oh Freedom! if to me belong
 Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
 Nor Marvell's wit and graceful song,
 Still with a love as deep and strong
 As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on thy shrine !

If this perhaps too modestly emphasizes the limitations and fails to recognize the artistic excellence

which his fine poetic sense secures, it clearly points out the sources of special power in his early work. He flung himself, heart and soul, into the antislavery contest, and the intensity of his feeling gives fire and force to the least perfect of his lines. This intensity of feeling never degenerates into bitterness. He was able to realize the position of those involved, by circumstances, in the system he was fighting. His "Randolph of Roanoke" is a remarkable and beautiful example of this breadth of view, and charity toward opponents.

In 1850 appeared the volume called "Songs of Labor." It takes its title from a series of poems showing the writer's sympathy with all forms of toil. But the two most striking poems in the volume do not belong to this series. They are "Barclay of Ury," a spirited ballad, describing the conversion to Quaker principles of a brave old Scotchman who had been a good fighter in the army of Gustavus Adolphus; and "Ichabod," in which is most solemnly expressed the feeling of most antislavery men about Daniel Webster's "Seventh of March Speech."

"Songs of
Labor," 1850.

In "The Chapel of the Hermits," 1852, appeared the stinging satire upon the relation of the church of his time to slavery and the fugitive slave law, called "A Sabbath Scene," the closing stanzas of which, however, show how Whittier's convictions rest on the basis of religious faith. "First Day Thoughts," in the same volume, gives very beautifully the positive belief which was one of the main sources of his power.

"The Chapel
of the Her-
mits," 1852.

And, as the path of duty is made plain,
 May grace be given that I may walk therein,
 Not like the hireling, for his selfish gain,
 With backward glances and reluctant tread,
 Making a merit of his coward dread,—
 But, cheerful, in the light around me thrown,
 Walking as one to pleasant service led ;
 Doing God's will as if it were my own,
 Yet trusting not in mine, but in his strength alone !

*"The Pan-
orama," 1856.*

The volume called "The Panorama," 1856, contained two poems which have perhaps done as much as any of his works to give Whittier widespread fame. They are "The Barefoot Boy" and "Maud Muller." Either of these could be condemned, in passages, from a technical point of view; but they have an element of real greatness in the expression of a thought or mood or feeling which is deep in human nature, and which therefore appeals to the universal consciousness; the one with its revelation of the joy of childhood, the other with its recognition of the tragedy that often lies in the common, matter-of-course incidents of life. "Maud Muller" has been one of the most popular ballads ever written in America.

*"In War
Time," 1863.
"National
Lyrics," 1865.*

"In War Time," 1863, and "National Lyrics," 1865, gathered up the poems written during the Civil War. It seems rather strange that a Quaker poet should have been the chief singer of the war time. A study of these poems, however, will show no love of battle for its own sake; but a celebration of the triumph of the principles for which he always contended.

This completes the first period of Whittier's poetical work. He had been successful in writing fervent appeals and soul-stirring ballads. The question would naturally arise whether he could be equally successful as a poet of peace. To this question the triumphant answer is "Snowbound," which appeared in 1866.

"Snow-bound," 1866.

The volumes that followed appeared rapidly. Whittier's pen was facile and he produced freely. Yet these later poems show a higher, more delicate art than even his most successful earlier work. "The Tent on the Beach," 1867, is a collection of narrative poems, arranged somewhat on the plan of Longfellow's "Tales of a Wayside Inn." "Among the Hills," 1868, contained, besides the title poem, "The Two Rabbis," a profound study of the problem of religious service. In the same volume, "The Meeting" is of unique value, as probably the only expression in poetry of the real meaning of the formless form of worship of the Friends. In 1870 "Miriam" appeared, containing, among other poems, the sweet idyll of childhood, "In School Days." "The Pennsylvania Pilgrim," 1872, had a ballad of strong tragic feeling, "Marguerite"; and the volume of 1874, called "Hazel Blossoms," contained also a number of graceful verses by his sister Elizabeth. In 1876 Whittier was chosen to write the hymn for the Centennial celebration at Philadelphia; and in the years succeeding, he published the following volumes: "The Vision of Echard," 1878; "The King's Missive," 1881; "The Bay of Seven Islands," 1883; "Saint Gregory's Quest," 1886; and "At

Sundown," a collection of a few last poems, privately printed in 1890, and published in 1892.

"Snowbound" is an idyll of the old New England life. It takes us into the farmhouse and opens to us the hearts and lives of its inmates. It is a most beautiful example of the poetry of common things, the seer-like power of looking into the heart of everyday realities and telling us their lesson. It describes a phase of American life which has vanished, both for gain and for loss, and the conditions of whose existence can never be repeated. Hence "Snowbound" has an enduring historical value, in addition to its priceless worth as poetry.

Take, first, the passage describing the snowstorm.

Unwarmed by any sunset light,
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,

* * * * *

5 Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below,—
A universe of sky and snow !

* * * * *

10 The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat ;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof ;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.

Notice, as of unusual descriptive power, lines 3-4, and 5-8, especially 8. Notice how the snow trans-

forms the commonplace into the poetical in the poet's imagination: the "well-sweep" into "Pisa's leaning miracle." Take, again, the passage describing the occupants of the barn:

- 15 The old horse thrust his long head out,
 And grave with wonder gazed about;
 The cock his lusty greeting said,
 And forth his speckled harem led;
 The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
20 And mild reproach of hunger looked;
 The horned patriarch of the sheep,
 Like Egypt's Amun roused from sleep,
 Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
 And emphasized with stamp of foot.

Whittier never, so far as I know, preached "Realism" or "Veritism" in art. He probably would not have cared about the name. But the real truth that lies in those words is by no one better illustrated than by him. He was not in the least afraid to put commonplace things into his verse, for he had the imaginative power by which the true poet sees pictures in what to other eyes contain only things. As an example of a very different sort of poetic power, take the passage describing the stranger guest:

- 25 A woman tropical, intense
 In thought and act, in soul and sense,
 She blended in a like degree
 The vixen and the devotee,
 Revealing with each freak or feint
30 The temper of Petruchio's Kate,
 The raptures of Siena's saint.
 Her tapering hand and rounded wrist
 Had facile power to form a fist;

The warm, dark languish of her eyes
 35 Was never safe from wrath's surprise.
 Brows saintly calm and lips devout
 Knew every change of scowl and pout;
 And the sweet voice had notes more high
 And shrill for social battle-cry.¹

It is a triumph of art to introduce this warm tropical nature into the calm New England company. It is not unreal, for just such natures were found there, and the life is not to be understood without reckoning them. But it is the work of a true genius to see this reality; and be able without an effect of incongruity to introduce this bit of warm color among his neutral tints.

Whittier is preëminently the ballad writer among our poets. Many of his poems easily become hymns, and he combines the power of lyrical expression with the swift movement of the story in verse as does no other American poet. Without the peculiar musical smoothness of Longfellow, the subtle thought of Emerson, the wit and humor of Holmes, the fulness of allusion and rich expressiveness of Lowell, there is in Whittier, in peculiar force, the song-story quality which makes a successful ballad.

A striking example of this "song story," or ballad, is the very familiar war poem, "Barbara Frietchie." Probably, unless we except "Maud Muller," this is the most widely popular of Whittier's writings. There has been a good deal of dispute as to whether the incident it relates is a bit of actual historic fact or

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not; and the weight of evidence seems to incline to the view that it never happened just as Whittier tells it. But this is not of any great importance. It was one of the stories current at the time, and unquestionably based to some extent on fact. Whittier accepted it, and put it into the form of a ballad, to express certain great truths of feeling. In studying it, we are not attracted to technical points of form. Whatever of alliteration, or other such qualities, exists, seems to have come about by the natural instinct of the writer rather than by conscious artistic effort.

The measure has a fine swinging march movement; for example, the lines

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host.

The rimes are generally good; but in one instance, as in the lines

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff,
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf,

Whittier does not hesitate to sacrifice rime to reason. The picture of Frederick and the country around it shows descriptive power, as does the line introducing Stonewall Jackson, and that already cited, suggesting the picture of the marching regiments with Barbara's flag waving over their heads. The descriptive effect in these lines seems to be due to the statement in fewest possible words of one or two striking particulars. In many of the lines there is a fitting of sound

to sense, to this extent, that the swing of the measure suggests the marching feet of the army. Indeed, a company of soldiers could march well to the rhythm of this ballad, whose time-beats fall as regularly and as forcibly as drum-taps. Movement is perhaps the most striking quality. We see the host coming into the town; we see the waving flags and feel the shame of their fall. Then comes the swift episode of Barbara, the flag waving from the window, the volley from the soldiers' muskets, and the daring deed of the old woman; then the marching of the troops on and through the town, the tossing of the one flag on the breeze, and then, to emphasize it all by contrast, the stillness of the night:

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town.

But the true secret of the power and popularity of this ballad lies deeper. It caught and expressed in stirring words one of the strongest enthusiasms of the war time,—that for the flag. The feeling which made the color-sergeant hold the flag with his arms, when both hands had been crippled, and die hugging it to him; the feeling which gave rise to the affectionate nickname, "Old Glory"; the feeling which takes the place in an American of the personal loyalty of an Englishman to the Queen,—this feeling throbs through every line. The great English ballads, like "Chevy Chase," for example, have generally thus seized upon some popular enthusiasm, and so made themselves an enduring place in the hearts of men. And this is one reason that Whit-

tier's ballads take such strong and enduring hold upon the popular affections.

Other writers of the New England group I shall be obliged to consider very briefly, though many of them would well repay extended study. Jones Very expressed the "Transcendental" philosophy in thoughtful verse. His first volume of poems, in which he voices this philosophy before Emerson's poetry had appeared, was published in 1839. Thus his work begins in the previous period. But he lived and wrote also in the later time. Posthumous editions of his works appeared in 1883 and 1886. He has written some especially perfect sonnets. He is considered by some critics one of the most suggestive and strongest writers of his generation. I will take space for one of his sonnets, which, it will be noticed, does not follow the strict Italian rules in the arrangement of its rimes.

Jones Very,
1813-1880.

THE DEAD

I see them,—crowd on crowd they walk the earth,
 Dry leafless trees no autumn wind laid bare ;
 And in their nakedness find cause for mirth,
 And all unclad would winter's rudeness dare ;
 No sap doth through their clattering branches flow,
 Whence springing leaves and blossoms bright appear ;
 Their hearts the living God have ceased to know
 Who gives the springtime to th' expectant year.
 They mimic life, as if from Him to steal
 His glow of health to paint the livid cheek ;
 They borrow words for thoughts they cannot feel,
 That with a seeming heart their tongue may speak ;
 And in their show of life more dead they live
 Than those that to the earth with many tears they give.

Celia Thaxter,
1836-1894.

William Wetmore Story,
1819-1895.

John Godfrey Saxe,
1816-1887.

Thomas William Parsons,
1819-1892.

Lucy Larcom,
1826-1893.

Christopher Pearse Cranch,
1813-1892.

Celia Thaxter, from her home on the Isles of Shoals, where she spent a singularly secluded girlhood, gave the world beautiful pictures of the nature in the midst of which she lived. William Wetmore Story, son of the great Chief Justice of Massachusetts, and one of the most distinguished of American sculptors, varied his artistic life by writing thoughtful and graceful verse and charming essays. John Godfrey Saxe, from the hills of Vermont, kept a continual flow of fun in verse, which was always bright and attractive and often musical. Thomas William Parsons was a dental surgeon, who devoted his leisure to literary work and gained distinction in poetry. His verses "On a Bust of Dante" are well known, and his rimed version of the "Inferno" and parts of the "Purgatorio" and "Paradiso" is a sympathetic and noble interpretation of the great Tuscan poet. It is said that he is the original of "The Poet," of the "Wayside Inn." Lucy Larcom was one of the Lowell, Massachusetts, factory girls, who excited Dickens' amazement on his first visit to America by their general intelligence and high character. She ceased to be a factory girl, and became a very popular poet. Her verse is musical, sweet, helpful in its tone, a true reflection of the pure, earnest, aspiring New England woman's soul. Christopher Pearse Cranch was born in Virginia, but he resided in New England and was identified with New England life and thought. He was a painter of considerable reputation. He was one of the contributors to the "Dial," the journal of the "Transcen-

dentalists," and wrote a translation of Virgil's "Æneid" and much other good verse. Henry Howard Brownell was the most voluminous poet of the Civil War. He saw some of the most exciting passages of the fighting, as acting ensign of Farragut's flag-ship, and one of his most important poems is a description of the fight at Mobile Bay. His poems are among the best war verses in our Literature. Charles Timothy Brooks was a clergyman of Newport, Rhode Island, who published verse of a scholarly, elegant character, and wrote one of the best versions of Goethe's "Faust." John Boyle O'Reilly was an Irishman, who was implicated in the Fenian uprising, arrested, condemned to death, and his sentence commuted to transportation to Australia. He escaped from Australia to this country, and became editor of the "Boston Pilot." He published "Songs from the Southern Seas," and other volumes of verse, which has a Celtic richness of imagery and warmth of feeling. He made himself so much honored in the land and state of his adoption that, when the monument to the Pilgrim Fathers was dedicated at Plymouth, this Irish Roman Catholic delivered the poem for the occasion. The following short lyric is thoroughly American in its tone :

Henry How-
ard Brownell,
1820-1872.

Charles
Timothy
Brooks,
1813-1883.

John Boyle
O'Reilly,
1844-1893.

A DEAD MAN¹

The Trapper died—our hero—and we grieved;
In every heart in camp the sorrow stirred.
"His soul was red!" the Indian cried, bereaved;
"A white man, he!" the grim old Yankee's word.

¹ From "The Pilot," 1878, by permission of the editor and of Mr. O'Reilly's executor.

So, brief and strong, each mourner gave his best,—
How kind he was! how brave! how keen to track;
And, as we laid him by the pines to rest,
A negro spoke with tears: "His heart was black!"

QUESTIONS

Give some account of the life of Emerson. What was the nature of his influence? What was his method? In what sense was he a mystic? What was the form of most of his poems? What defect is there in their expression of thought? What great excellence do they have? State some of the elements of strength and beauty in the poem "Concord Fight." How does the "Rhodora" illustrate his independent management of form? Note a line in which alliteration is effectively used. Note the effect of the irregularity in one of the lines. What special suggestiveness in the poem "Days"? What contrast? What message finds expression in the extract from "Voluntaries"? What are some of the more difficult of his poems?

What writers constitute the "Cambridge Group"? Give some general account of the life of Oliver Wendell Holmes. What are some of the most striking characteristics of his poetry? What was his relation to political and religious movements? With what did his literary career begin, and how long did it continue? Give the order of publication of his most important works. What is the special charm of "The Last Leaf"? What notable quality of the humor? What finely suggestive adjective? What is the effect of the closing stanza? For what difficult kind of verse was Holmes particularly distinguished? Explain the college class feeling illustrated in some of his poems. What feeling pervades the poem "The Boys"? Who are some of the distinguished men alluded to in this poem? To what class of poems does "The Chambered Nautilus" belong? What lyrical qualities are strong in it? What is the progress of thought? How does the stanza structure accord with the thought? What is the significance of the line arrangement? What fine examples of assonance and alliteration does it contain?

Give the principal events of the life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. How are some of the supreme crises of his life

associated with his poems? What were his first publications? What poem first gave him popularity? What was his first volume of poems? What famous ballads were in one of his earlier volumes? What was the origin of "Evangeline"? Describe the plan of "Christus." Give some account of "Hiawatha." In what sense is it original? What quality, unusual for Longfellow, is found in "The Courtship of Miles Standish"? What was the plan of "The Tales of a Wayside Inn"? What were his later publications? What is the central incident of "Evangeline"? In the selection, how does the style correspond to the thought? Note the use of alliteration and assonance. Is the hexameter line in this poem successfully used? What are some of the peculiarities of the verse in the selection from "The Golden Legend"? How is character brought out? Is the poem really dramatic in its effect? What are some of the evidences of artistic skill in the "Hymn to the Night"? What is the rime scheme? What figure prevades the whole? What special characteristics of Longfellow are illustrated by this poem?

Give an outline of the career of James Russell Lowell. Into what two groups may his poetical works be divided? What is his ideal of the poet's mission as expressed in two of his earlier poems? What are some of the more important poems in his earlier volumes? What are some of the characteristic qualities of "Sir Launfal"? In the extracts from that poem what are some of the evidences of real observation of nature? What are examples of his power of expression? How is his ideal illustrated? What is the character of the "Fable for Critics"? What historical events were the occasion of "The Biglow Papers"? What dramatic qualities do they display? What is the effect of the dialect? What evidences of nature study in the selection? What are some of the qualities, in form and thought, of "The Present Crisis"? What poem probably comes nearest to Lowell's ideal? In the selection from "The Commemoration Ode," what metaphors and similes are notable for freshness and force? What epithets are especially well chosen? Point out some lines of especial strength. What evidence of remarkable insight is there in these lines?

How did Whittier's early life differ from that of the other poets of the "New England Group"? What was his relation to the antislavery movement? How may his poetry be divided?

What qualities are noted by himself in the "Proem" to "Voices of Freedom"? What poems of special interest appeared in the volume called "Songs of Labor"? How are his religious feelings revealed in the poems cited from "The Chapel of the Hermits" volume? What are some of the reasons for the great popularity of "Maud Muller"? What was Whittier's relation to the Civil War of 1861-1865; and what famous ballad belongs to that period? What are some of the more important volumes of his poetry since 1865? To what class of poems does "Snow-bound" belong? What sort of life does it reveal? What lines of special descriptive power in the opening passage? In what lines does poetic imagination specially appear? How does the poem show realistic power? What special realistic power is shown in the last selection? In what class of poems has Whittier shown surpassing excellence? What is the story of "Barbara Frietchie"? What special quality of form characterizes it? What special descriptive effects are there, and how are they secured? How is sound fitted to sense? What is the most striking quality? What contrast at the close? What is the secret of this ballad's power?





Walt Whitman

CHAPTER X

PERIOD OF THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1850-1880

VERSE (Continued)

ONE of the most interesting figures in our Literature is that of Walt Whitman. He was a printer by trade, taught school, and worked at the trade of carpenter. He acted as a volunteer nurse in the army hospitals during the war of 1861-1865, and held a government clerkship in Washington till 1874. The last years of his life he lived in retirement in Camden, New Jersey. He had extreme theories as to poetry, and tried to carry them out in his own work. He believed that everything connected with human life is essentially pure, and therefore fit subject for poetical treatment. An attempt to carry out this theory with absolute literalness might be expected to lead to some startling results, and it does in the case of Whitman's poetry. No one who has studied his work or his character can think that he has any impure or immoral intention. But the effect in general literature of some of his writings is very much the same as that which would be produced by a crazy man appearing on the street without his clothes. No one would receive moral injury, but the police would cover him up and insist on his retiring. Another

Walt
Whitman,
born in New
York, 1819;
died in New
Jersey, 1892.

theory of Whitman's is an extreme development of Wordsworth's dictum that there is no real distinction between poetic and prose diction. In some of his compositions Whitman seems to abandon any distinction of form except the arrangement of words in lines of varying length. In many of them, however, there is a majestic rhythm, like that of some of the passages of the Psalms and Prophets in the English Bible. Sometimes he piles up names in shapeless mounds of speech; or strings them together in long lists of things connected with the subject of which he is writing. But in many passages he has voiced the music and the poetry in our everyday modern life; and he sometimes uses the forms of metre and rhythm and rime with very grand and beautiful effect, making us wish he had not been quite so much a slave to his own theories.

He has been extravagantly praised and as extravagantly condemned. In England especially, his writings have been welcomed as the most characteristic American work that has ever appeared. Emerson spoke of them in the highest terms; and there has always been a little company of Whitman worshippers. On the other hand, certain — very few — passages in his books, the results of his extreme theories, are as impossible to read in general company as some passages of Chaucer, and led to the prohibition of the sale of his works in Massachusetts. There can be no doubt that some of Whitman's writings will last as long as anything in our Literature; and some thoughtful critics will always consider

these as among the great productions of the human mind. But it seems probable, also, that the crudities of form and grossness of expression which mar them will prevent their ever gaining general acceptance.

"Leaves of Grass" is the most complete example of his peculiarities. It was issued in constantly changing form, in a number of editions, from 1855 to 1883. "Drum Taps," 1865; "Democratic Vistas," 1870; "Memoranda during the War," 1875; "November Bougns," 1888; and "Autobiographia," 1892, are among his most important publications. A selection of his writings has been edited by Mr. Arthur Stedman, which is probably the most easily accessible means of getting at what is best in Whitman. The following brief selections are to some extent representative of his work.

First, as a very moderate example of his more prosaic manner, read these lines from

O VAST RONDURE

After the seas are all crossed (as they seem already crossed),
After the great captains and engineers have accomplished their
work,
After the noble inventors, after the scientists, the chemist, the
geologist, ethnologist,
Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,
The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

Imagine the line about the inventors and scientists spun out in the same way to a length of three or four ordinary lines, and you will have Whitman in his

most exasperating form. As an example of his best work, read

TO THE MAN-OF-WAR BIRD¹

Thou who hast slept all night upon the storm,
 Waking renew'd on thy prodigious pinions,
 (Burst the wild storm? above it thou ascended'st
 And rested on the sky, thy slave that cradled thee),
 Now a blue point, far, far in heaven floating,
 As to the light emerging here on deck I watch thee,
 (Myself a speck, a point, on the world's floating vast).

Far, far at sea,
 After the night's fierce drifts have strewn the shore with wrecks,
 With reappearing day as now so happy and serene,
 The rosy and elastic dawn, the flashing sun,
 The limpid spread of air cerulean,
 Thou also reappearest.

Thou born to match the gale (thou art all wings),
 To cope with heaven and earth and sea and hurricane,
 Thou ship of air that never furl'st thy sails,
 Days, even weeks untired and onward, through spaces, realms,
 gyrating,
 At dusk that look'st on Senegal, at morn America,
 That sport'st amid the lightning flash and thunder cloud,
 In them, in thy experiences, hadst thou my soul,
 What joys! what joys were thine!

Notice the boldness and originality of the phrases "slept all night upon the storm," "the sky, thy slave that cradled thee," "the night's fierce drifts," "the rosy and elastic dawn," "Thou ship of air that never furl'st thy sails." Any one of these would give character to a much longer poem by other writers. There is a grand rhythm in this, like the sweep of

¹ These selections from Whitman are from "Leaves of Grass," Small, Maynard & Co., Publishers, by permission of the literary executors.

the bird's wings. And the thought with which the poem closes is sublime, and grandly spoken. If Whitman had always written like this, there would have been no question with any one as to his greatness. That he could pull in harness if he would is proved by some beautiful poems, in which the metre is perfect, though he refuses even in these to be hampered by rime. Many pieces of verse of many grades of excellence were suggested by the tragic death of Abraham Lincoln; but, by general consent, the first place among them will be given, if not to the passage quoted from Lowell's "Commemoration Ode," then to Whitman's "Captain, my Captain." While Lowell gave supreme utterance to the nation's judgment as to Lincoln's character, Whitman expressed, as did no other poet, the despairing grief of the moment of his death. Hence it must be said that as lyric poetry Whitman's is the finer work.

CAPTAIN, MY CAPTAIN

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,—
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths—for you the shores
a-crowding,

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning ;
 Here, Captain ! dear father !
 This arm beneath your head !
 It is some dream that on the deck,
 You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,
 My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,
 The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,
 From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won ;
 Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells !
 But I with mournful tread,
 Walk the deck my Captain lies,
 Fallen cold and dead.

Josiah
 Gilbert
 Holland,
 born in
 Massachusetts, 1819;
 died in New
 York, 1881.

One of the most useful men in literary life in America, during this period, and one whose writings reached one of the largest circles of readers, was Josiah Gilbert Holland. He was a typical American, in the variety of his talents. His education was irregular, and obtained with difficulty. He taught school, at different times, in different parts of the country; was an operator in a daguerrotypist's gallery; studied medicine, and began its practice; and, at last, at the age of thirty, found his real place, in journalism. He was for a number of years associated with Samuel Bowles, as editor of "The Springfield (Mass.) Republican," which, under their management, became one of our most widely influential newspapers. His great work, in journalism, was the establishment of "Scribner's Monthly," which afterwards became "The Century Magazine," and whose beginning certainly marks an important epoch in the development of the American monthly.

magazine. As a poet, Dr. Holland is best known by "Bittersweet," a poem partly in dramatic form, which appeared in 1858, and of which more than seventy-five thousand copies were sold. It is too much of a theological treatise for enduring popularity as a poem; and lacks the spontaneity of a work of great genius. But it has some passages of very great beauty; for example, the slumber song "What is the Little One thinking about?" and the cellar scene with its delicious description of the apples and potatoes. Other narrative poems having similar characteristics to those of "Bittersweet," but inferior in freshness of interest, are "Kathrina," "The Mistress of the Manse," and "The Marble Prophecy."

Writers of popular war poems during the sixties were Charles G. Halpine, "Private Miles O'Reilly," and Forceythe Wilson, author of "The Old Sergeant." The early death of the latter perhaps hindered his reaching the reputation which his poems seemed to promise.

Emma Lazarus has a unique position among our writers, as representing the Hebrew spirit in modern poetry. She was of Jewish race, and intensely interested in the history of her people and in their present condition. She published a translation of the poems of Heinrich Heine, and a volume of original poems, called "Songs of a Semite." After her death her works were published in a collected edition, under the title, "Poems, Narrative, Dramatic, and Lyric." As unique, in their subject and spirit, and

Emma
Lazarus,
born in New
York, 1849;
died, 1887.

as of great interest in themselves, they deserve attention, and a short lyric is therefore given.

THE BANNER OF THE JEW¹

Wake, Israel, wake! Recall to-day
 The glorious Maccabean rage,
 The sire heroic, hoary-gray,
 His five-fold lion-lineage:
 The Wise, the Elect, the Help-of-God,
 The Burst-of-Spring, the Avenging Rod.

From Mizpeh's mountain ridge they saw
 Jerusalem's empty streets, her shrine
 Laid waste where Greeks profaned the Law,
 With idol and with pagan sign.
 Mourners in tattered black were there,
 With ashes sprinkled on their hair.

Then from the stony peak there rang
 A blast to ope the graves: downpoured
 The Maccabean clan, who sang
 Their battle-anthem to the Lord.
 Five heroes lead, and following, see,
 Ten thousand rush to victory!

Oh, for Jerusalem's trumpet now,
 To blow a blast of shattering power,
 To wake the sleepers high and low,
 And rouse them to the urgent hour!
 No hand for vengeance—but to save,
 A million naked swords should wave.

Oh deem not dead that martial fire,
 Say not the mystic flame is spent!
 With Moses' law and David's lyre,
 Your ancient strength remains unbent.
 Let but an Ezra rise anew,
 To lift the Banner of the Jew!

¹ Copyright, 1882, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

A rag, a mock at first — ere long,
When men have bled and women wept,
To guard its precious folds from wrong,
Even they who shrunk, even they who slept,
Shall leap to bless it, and to save.
Strike! for the brave revere the brave!

There are three poets who reached a high degree of fame during this period and who therefore should be studied here; who, happily for the reading public, are still living and writing. Their work must therefore be regarded as incomplete; and the comparatively small space we give to Mr. Stoddard, Mr. Aldrich, and Mr. Stedman is due to this happy circumstance and is not to be considered as indicating their comparative importance. Of these the first named is the veteran of our living men of letters.

Richard Henry Stoddard, though born in Massachusetts, has spent almost all his life in New York, where he has been one of our most industrious and able writers. It is not easy to see why Mr. Stoddard's poetry has not been more generally popular. He has written some of the most beautiful verse in recent American poetry, but he has never struck exactly the note that rang in the popular ear so as to create a wide demand for his works. He has published: "Footprints," 1849; "Poems," 1852; "Songs of Summer," 1856; "The King's Bell," 1862; "The Book of the East," 1867; and "Under the Evening Lamp," 1892; besides biographies, juvenile books, and a great deal of valuable work in the way of compilations and editions of the works of others. At his best, Mr. Stoddard shows a delicate

Richard
Henry
Stoddard,
born in
Massachusetts, 1825.

fancy and sweet melody in verse, as is seen in the little lyric we give below.

THE FLIGHT OF YOUTH¹

There are gains for all our losses,
There are balms for all our pain :
But when youth, the dream departs,
It takes something from our hearts,
And it never comes again.

We are stronger, and are better,
Under manhood's sterner reign :
Still we feel that something sweet
Followed youth, with flying feet,
And will never come again.

Something beautiful is vanished,
And we sigh for it in vain :
We behold it everywhere,
On the earth, and in the air,
But it never comes again.

This has some of the finest qualities of pure lyric verse. It expresses the haunting sense of regret for what we cannot describe, but miss every moment, which all who have passed beyond youth experience. It has the beautiful reserve of fine art. All is said, and said musically and clearly; but not a word too much comes to mar the effect.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich was born in New Hampshire, and spent a considerable part of his life in New York, at first in mercantile business, but later as editor of the "New York Home Journal." Subsequently he edited the "Boston Every Saturday," and for some years "The Atlantic Monthly." Mr. Aldrich has divided his strength about equally

Thomas
Bailey
Aldrich,
born in New
Hampshire,
1836.

¹ Printed by the courteous permission of the Author.

between verse and fiction. He has published editions of his poems in 1863, 1865, and 1882; "Cloth of Gold," 1874; "Flower and Thorn," 1876; "Mercedes and Other Lyrics," 1883; "Wyndham Towers," 1889; "The Sisters' Tragedy," 1891. His "Ballad of Babie Belle" was very popular. It cannot be said that his later work in verse has greatly extended his popularity. It has, however, strengthened his hold upon critical readers. He is probably our best living master of the delicate, refined, subtle expression of poetical ideas in verse. His lyrics are like finely polished gems. He has also written strong narrative verse. I give a sad little lyric as an example.

PRESCIENCE

The new moon hung in the sky, the sun was low in the west,
And my betrothed and I in the church-yard paused to rest —
 Happy maiden and lover, dreaming the old dream over :
The light winds wandered by, and robins chirped from the nest.

And lo ! in the meadow-sweet was the grave of a little child,
With a crumbling stone at the feet and the ivy running wild —
 Tangled ivy and clover folding it over and over :
Close to my sweetheart's feet was the little mound up-piled.

Stricken with nameless fears, she shrank and clung to me,
And her eyes were filled with tears for a sorrow I did not see :
 Lightly the winds were blowing, softly her tears were flowing —
Tears for the unknown years and a sorrow that was to be.

Edmund Clarence Stedman, also born in New England, has spent almost all his life in New York. He has been actively engaged in business as a stock-broker ; but his heart has been in literary work and the literary life. Of late years, the most of his

Edmund
Clarence
Stedman,
born in Con-
necticut,
1833.

¹ Copyright, 1884, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

time and strength has been given to critical writing; and in this he has done very important work. His poetry has qualities entirely original and strong. What criticism has gained by his later work, poetry seems to have lost; and lovers of poetry will, perhaps, feel that the loss has been greater than the gain. He has published "Poems, Lyric and Idyllic," 1860; "Alice of Monmouth," 1864; "The Blameless Prince," 1869; "Hawthorne and Other Poems," 1877; and also a collected edition of his poems. He has recently (1897) issued a volume called "Poems Now First Collected." Lovers of good poetry are rejoicing that Mr. Stedman is returning, after twenty years of valuable critical writing, to his first love. "The Diamond Wedding," a satire on society, first attracted general attention to him. His "Alice of Monmouth" is the best extended poem called out by the Civil War. It is, indeed, one of our very best narrative poems. Its description of the "Monmouth" scenery, and especially of the "Cherry Orchard," is very beautiful; and there is a vigorous, rushing movement in the "Cavalry Charge" which stirs the blood. "Wanted — a Man!" and "How Old Brown Took Harper's Ferry" are poems of unique power; and "The Heart of New England" and "The Doorstep" are among our best poems of New England life. He has seen and expressed also, the poetry that lies hidden in business; and in this respect "Pan in Wall Street" and "Israel Freyer's Bid for Gold" stand by themselves in our anthology.

The following selection is one of the group of poems gathered, in his recently published volume, under the general title of "The Carib Sea." They all have to do with the scenes or the associations of the West India Islands and the waters which surround them. "Sargasso weed" was first observed by Columbus and is described in the diary of his famous voyage.

SARGASSO WEED¹

Out from the seething Stream
 To the steadfast trade-wind's courses,
Over the bright vast swirl
 Of a tide from evil free,—
Where the ship has a level beam,
 And the storm has spent his forces,
And the sky is a hollow pearl
 Curved over a sapphire sea.

Here it floats as of old,
 Beaded with gold and amber,
Sea-frond buoyed with fruit,
 Sere as the yellow oak,
Long since carven and scrolled,
 Of some blue-ceiled Gothic chamber
Used to the viol and lute
 And the ancient belfry's stroke.

Eddying far and still
 In the drift that never ceases,
The dun Sargasso weed
 Slips from before our prow,
And its sight makes strong our will,
 As of old the Genoese's,
When he stood in his hour of need
 On the Santa Maria's bow.

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Ay, and the winds at play
 Toy with these peopled islands,
 Each of itself as well
 Naught but a brave New World,
 Where the crab and sea-slug stay
 In the lochs of its tiny highlands,
 And the nautilus moors his shell
 With his sail and streamers furled.

Each floats ever and on
 As the round green earth is floating
 Out through the sea of space
 Bearing our mortal kind,
 Parasites soon to be gone,
 Whom others be sure are noting,
 While to their astral race
 We in our turn are blind.

Henry
 Timrod,
 born in
 South Caro-
 lina, 1829;
 died, 1867.

Among the saddest results of the Civil War was the sacrifice of precious young lives. In this respect the Southern States suffered proportionately more than the Northern, for the simple reason that active participation in the war was there more nearly universal. Among others, three of the most promising poets of that generation died in comparatively early life, undoubtedly in consequence of the exposures and privations to which they were subjected, in connection with the war. William Gilmore Simms was the centre of a literary circle in Charleston, South Carolina, and of this circle, one of the brightest ornaments was Henry Timrod. He was "The Poet of the War," from the standpoint of the Southern States; and has left some of the best verse called forth by the struggle. A very competent critic has written of Timrod: "The South has probably never produced a poet of more delicate imagination, of

greater rhythmic sweetness, of purer sentiment, and more tender emotion." The lines given below are from the opening part of his poem,

THE COTTON BOLL

While I recline
 At ease beneath
 This immemorial pine,
 Small sphere !
 (By dusky fingers brought this morning here
 And shown with boastful smiles),
 I turn thy cloven sheaf,
 Through which the soft white fibres peer,
 That, with their gossamer bands,
 Unite, like love, the sea-divided lands,
 And, slowly, thread by thread,
 Draw forth the folded strands,
 Than which the trembling line,
 By whose frail help yon startled spider fled
 Down the tall spear-grass from his swinging bed,
 Is scarce more fine ;
 And as the tangled skein
 Unravels in my hands,
 Betwixt me and the noonday light
 A veil seems lifted, and for miles and miles
 The landscape broadens on my sight,
 As, in the little boll, there lurked a spell
 Like that which, in the ocean shell,
 With mystic sound
 Breaks down the narrow walls that hem us round,
 And turns some city lane
 Into the restless main,
 With all its capes and isles.

Timrod's works were edited and published by his friend, Paul Hamilton Hayne, also a victim of the exposures, trials, and losses of the Civil War. Hayne lived longer and left a larger bulk of production.

Paul Ham-
ilton Hayne,
born in
South Caro-
lina, 1830 ;
died in
Georgia,
1886.

His sonnets are especially beautiful, and some of his war songs are very strong and spirited. Probably his best work is in the style of meditative communion with nature. He has left us beautiful lines in this vein; and they are of special interest as representing so different a type of natural scenery from that mirrored in the work of the New England poets. The sonnet below well illustrates his delicate art and the earnest, pure character of his thought.

FATE, OR GOD?

Beyond the record of all eldest things,
 Beyond the rule and regions of past time,
 From out Antiquity's hoary-headed rime,
 Looms the dread phantom of a King of kings :
 Round His vast brows the glittering circlet clings
 Of a thrice royal crown ; behind Him climb
 O'er Atlantean limbs and breast sublime,
 The sombre splendors of mysterious wings ;
 Deep calms of measureless power, in awful state,
 Gird and uphold Him ; a miraculous rod,
 To heal or smite, arms His infallible hands ;
 Known in all ages, worshipped in all lands,
 Doubt names this half-embodied mystery — Fate,
 While Faith, with lowliest reverence, whispers — God.¹

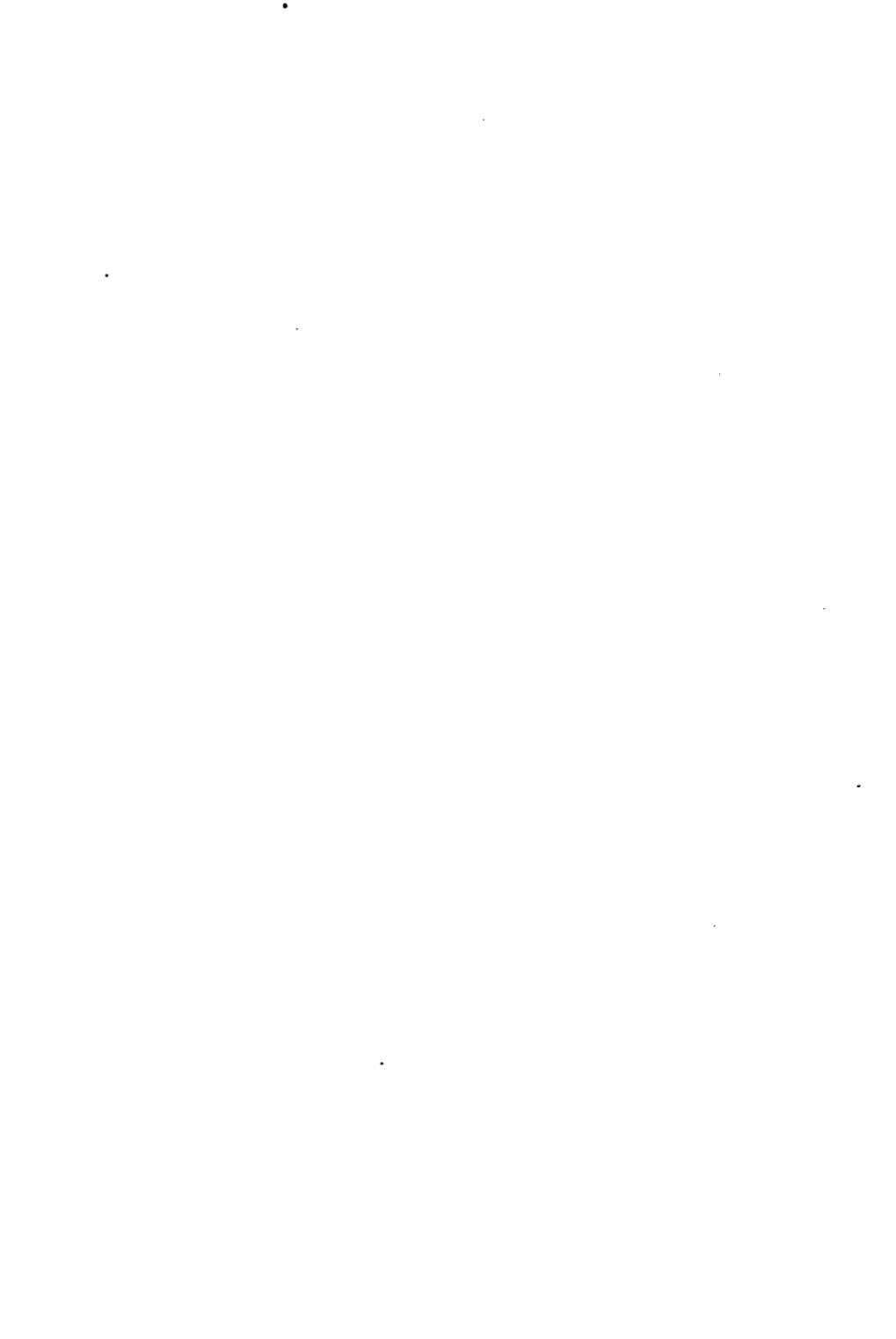
Another representative of the loss and suffering entailed upon the nation, and especially upon the Southern States, by the war of 1861–1865, is Sidney Lanier. He graduated from Oglethorpe College, Georgia; but immediately enlisted in the Southern army, and served through the war, suffering from exposure and imprisonment, and probably thus breaking down his health. His life was a pathetic struggle

Sidney
Lanier, born
in Georgia,
1842; died
in North
Carolina,
1881.

¹ Copyright, 1882, the Lothrop Publishing Co.



Sidney Lanier



with disease and weakness of body,—a struggle not so much for health and more years of existence in the world, as for strength and time to utter the thoughts and test by experiment the principles of whose truth he was profoundly convinced. He taught school and practised law for a time; and was lecturer on Literature at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore. This, with a short list of his publications, is the meagre outline of a life to whose worth and real interest it does scant justice. He was an accomplished musician, the flute being his favorite instrument; this musical tendency having a great deal to do with his literary work. He was a student, with an acute, theorizing cast of mind, and worked out for himself an elaborate theory of poetical composition; which he has stated in his book, "The Science of English Verse." The essential point of the theory is implied in the title. Verse, in his view, is an art, resting upon a science which needs only investigation to be capable of a statement as definite, positive, and complete as that of any other science.

He published, in 1867, "Tiger Lilies," a prose romance based upon his war experiences. In 1880 appeared the formal statement of his theories of versification, in "The Science of English Verse." A course of lectures on the "English Novel," delivered at Johns Hopkins University, was published in 1883. Books written probably with first reference to the pressing financial needs of his life were the series of reproductions of old English legends and ballads: "The Boy's Froissart," 1878; "The Boy's King

Arthur," 1880; "The Boy's Mabinogion," 1881; "The Boy's Percy," 1882. His poems appeared at various times, in various periodicals; the one which first attracted general attention being "Corn," which was published in "Lippincott's Magazine," Philadelphia, 1874. This gave him recognition as the most important poet from the South; and as such he was chosen to write the words for the Cantata, with which the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, 1876, was opened; Whittier writing the "Hymn," and Bayard Taylor the extended poem. A collected edition of his poems was published after his death, in 1884, edited by his wife Mary D. Lanier. Lanier's theory of verse is at the opposite extreme from Whitman's. He believes that all expression in words is essentially musical; the difference between speech and what is usually called music being that speech has far greater variety of tone. Hence his poems are remarkable for their elaborate and beautiful study of tone. No one has shown such mastery of the possible modulations of sound. It is not that he sacrifices thought to sound; but that, to an unusual degree, he seeks to fit thought and sound together. E. C. Stedman expresses the difference between Lanier and other poets in this particular by saying that Lanier would add to melody, harmony and counterpoint. There is a possible analogy between his theory of the relation between thought and sound in words, and that of Wagner as to the relation between music and text in the music-drama. Not only must the thought be expressed in musical words, but the sound must be

held of supreme importance in the expression of the thought. Read the opening lines of

THE MARSHES OF GLYNN¹

Glooms of the live-oaks, beautiful-braided and woven

With intricate shades of the vines that myriad-cloven

Clamber the forks of the multiform boughs,—

Emerald twilights,—

5 Virginal shy lights,

Wrought of the leaves to allure to the whisper of vows,

When lovers pace timidly down through the green colonnades

Of the dim sweet woods, of the dear dark woods,

Of the heavenly woods and glades,

10 That run to the radiant marginal sand-beach within

The wide sea-marshes of Glynn ;—

Beautiful glooms, soft dusks in the noon-day fire,—

Wildwood privacies, closets of lone desire,

Chamber from chamber parted with wavering arras of
leaves,—

15 Cells for the passionate pleasure of prayer to the soul that
grieves,

Pure with a sense of the passing of saints through the wood,
Cool for the dutiful weighing of ill with good.

All the elements of form we have studied are illustrated here. The assonance is particularly delicate and beautiful in its effects. The alliteration is rich and musical. The rimes are varied and perfect. The length of line is varied, but always rhythmical. Notice how the vowel sounds accord with the thought in line 15, the close *a*'s and *e*'s giving intensity to the expression; and in the closing line, where the double *o* and the *u* seem to carry the calm coolness of the first word through the whole line. We will study, also, a short passage from

¹ Copyright, 1884, Charles Scribner's Sons. New York.

CORN¹

- I wander to the zigzag-cornered fence
 Where sassafras, intrenched in brambles dense,
 Contests with stolid vehemence
 The march of culture, setting limb and thorn
 5 As pikes against the army of the corn.
- * * * * * *
- Look, out of line one tall corn-captain stands
 Advanced beyond the foremost of his bands,
 And waves his blades upon the very edge
 And hottest thicket of the battling hedge.
- 10 Thou lustrous stalk, that ne'er mayst walk nor talk,
 Still shalt thou type the poet-soul sublime
 That leads the vanward of his timid time
 And sings up cowards with commanding rime —
 Soul calm, like thee, yet fain, like thee, to grow
- 15 By double increment, above, below ;
 Soul homely, as thou art, yet rich in grace like thee,
 Teaching the yeomen selfless chivalry
 That moves in gentle curves of courtesy ;
 Soul filled like thy long veins with sweetness tense,
- 20 By every god-like sense
 Transmuted from the four wild elements.
 Drawn to high plans,
 Thou liftest more stature than a mortal man's,
 Yet ever piercest downward in the mould
- 25 And keepest hold
 Upon the reverend and steadfast earth
 That gave thee birth ;
 Yea, standest smiling in thy future grave,
 Serene and brave,
- 30 With unremitting breath
 Inhaling life from death,
 Thine epitaph writ fair in fruitage eloquent,
 Thyself thy monument.

¹ Copyright, 1884, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. First published, 1876, in "Lippincott's Magazine," Philadelphia.

One is struck at once, in reading this, with the originality of expression. It is so individual, so different from the accustomed phrases, that the first impression is a little puzzling. Line 11, "Still shalt thou type the poet-soul," and line 13, "sings up cowards," illustrate this. Other examples are in lines 18, 19, 23. These expressions are not obscure. They are simply unusual, and as soon as we have grasped their meaning, they are felt to be the clearest, as well as the strongest possible, utterance of the thought. Notice the use of consonant sounds: *r* in line 2; *l* in line 6; *t* in line 10, and so, in every line. Examples of corresponding care in the use of vowel sounds are in lines 18, 26, and others. The thought and the language are thoroughly realistic and American. With "Corn," which is used in the American sense, is associated the sassafras; and it grows in a field with a zigzag fence. At the same time the personification is bold, and given in poetical language; as, "leads the vanward of his timid time," line 12; "standest smiling in thy future grave," line 28.

"The Symphony" is, perhaps, the most characteristic of Lanier's poems, its subject affording a specially perfect opportunity for the application of his peculiar theories. It is the outcry of Art, the word being interpreted in the highest sense, against the selfishness, vulgarity, and baseness of Trade. Each of the instruments in turn speaks its protest, and all blend in the message of music; which in the last line is thus defined :

"Music is love in search of a word."

It opens with the cry of the violins :

“O Trade ! O Trade ! would thou wert dead !
 The Time needs heart—’tis tired of head :
 We’re all for love,” the violins said.
 “Of what avail the rigorous tale
 5 Of bill for coin and box for bale ?
 Grant thee, O Trade ! thine uttermost hope :
 Level red gold with blue sky-slope,
 And base it deep as devils grope : .
 When all’s done, what hast thou won
 10 Of the only sweet that’s under the sun ?
 Ay, canst thou buy a single sigh
 Of true love’s least, least ecstasy ? ”
 Then, with a bridegroom’s heart-beats trembling,
 All the mightier strings assembling,
 15 Ranged them on the violins’ side
 As when the bridegroom leads the bride,
 And, heart in voice, together cried :
 “Yea, what avail the endless tale
 Of gain by cunning and plus by sale ?
 20 Look up the land, look down the land
 The poor, the poor, the poor, they stand
 Wedged by the pressing of Trade’s hand
 Against an inward opening door
 That pressure tightens evermore :
 25 They sigh a monstrous foul-air sigh
 For the outside leagues of liberty,
 Where Art, sweet lark, translates the sky
 Into a heavenly melody.
 ‘Each day, all day’—these poor folk say—
 30 ‘In the same old year long, drear-long way,
 We weave in the mills and heave in the kilns,
 We sieve mine-meshes under the hills,
 And thieve much gold from the devil’s bank tills,
 To relieve, O God, what manner of ills ? —
 35 The beasts, they hunger, and eat, and die ;
 And so do we, and the world’s a sty ;
 Hush, fellow-swine : why nuzzle and cry ?
Swinehood hath no remedy,

- Say many men, and hasten by,
40 Clamping the nose and blinking the eye.
But who said once, in the lordly tone,
Man shall not live by bread alone
But all that cometh from the Throne?
Hath God said so?
45 But Trade saith *No* :
And the kilns and the curt-tongued mills say *Go* :
There's plenty that can, if you can't: we know.
Move out, if you think you're underpaid.
The poor are prolific; we're not afraid;
50 *Trade is trade.'"*

We notice the same striking originality of phrase; but this is more mature work, and there is scarcely ever here even the passing feeling of obscurity. Lines 7, 8, 10, are examples of the fresh, strong expression characteristic of the whole. To the violins, as the leading instruments of the orchestra, is assigned the outcry of complaint and question; and the other instruments give the answer. We note, as we read these lines carefully, that the prevailing vowel sounds are the *i*'s, *e*'s, and *a*'s. Whether these sounds are especially suitable to the violin, we would not like to say dogmatically; but according to Lanier's scheme they should be, and it seems to us they are. Notice the frequent use of rime within the line, as in lines 4, 9, 11, 18, 29, 30, and others. Notice also the beautiful use of assonance in line 27 and others. All these technical points of construction are kept well subordinated to the thought. With Lanier poetry was a sacred power, used only for the highest ends; and here the cry of the violins, "All for love," wails and sings itself into

our hearts through all the “mightier strings assembling.” Further on in the poem, Lanier’s own instrument, the flute, speaks. Notice the same characteristics in this; but see how the prevailing *i* and *e* sounds are now modified by the flute like *u* and *o*.

And then, as when from words that seem but rude
We pass to silent pain that sits abrood
Back in our heart’s great dark and solitude,
So sank the strings to gentle throbbing
5 Of long chords change-marked with sobbing —
Motherly sobbing, not distinctlier heard
Than half wing-openings of the sleeping bird,
Some dream of danger to her young hath stirred.
Then stirring and demurring ceased, and lo!
10 Every least ripple of the strings’ song-flow
Died to a level with each level bow
And made a great chord tranquil-surfaced so,
As a brook beneath his curving bank doth go
To linger in the sacred dark and green
15 Where many boughs the still pool overlean
And many leaves make shadow with their sheen.
But presently
A velvet flute-note fell down pleasantly
Upon the bosom of that harmony,
And sailed and sailed incessantly,
20 As if a petal from a wild rose blown
Had fluttered down upon that pool of tone
And boatwise dropped o’ the convex side
And floated down the glassy tide
And clarified and glorified
25 The solemn spaces where the shadows bide.
From the warm concave of that fluted note
Somewhat, half song, half odor, forth did float,
As if a rose might somehow be a throat:
“When Nature from her far-off glen
30 Flutes her soft messages to men,

The flute can say them o'er again ;
 Yea, Nature, singing sweet and lone,
 Breathes through life's strident polyphone
 The flute-voice in the world of tone.

35

Sweet friends,
 Man's love ascends
 To finer and diviner ends
 Than man's mere thought e'er comprehends.
 For I, e'en I,

40 As here I lie,

A petal on a harmony,
 Demand of Science whence and why
 Man's tender pain, man's inward cry,
 When he doth gaze on earth and sky?"¹

Lanier's early death must be regarded as one of the most serious losses of the kind to American Literature. Probably maturity of mind and longer labor would have given yet greater power of expression, and we should have had poems from his pen which would have seized upon the popular fancy, as well as those we have, which will always delight the student.

An interesting group of poets of this period may be associated in the mind as belonging to Pennsylvania, the central figure of which is that author of extraordinary versatility of talent, Bayard Taylor. Taylor was of Quaker extraction, but had little of the Quaker spirit in his life or works. He had only a high-school education, and began life as a printer, though he was writing verses for the newspapers from the time he was a boy of fourteen. He was associated with "The

Bayard
Taylor, born
in Pennsyl-
vania, 1825;
died in
Berlin, Ger-
many, 1878.

¹ Copyright, 1884, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. First published, 1876, in "Lippincott's Magazine," Philadelphia.

Philadelphia Saturday Evening Post," and with the advance of fifty dollars from that paper, and the same amount from the "United States Gazette," with the promise that fifteen letters would be taken by "The New York Tribune," he set out upon his first journey abroad. He spent two years travelling over Europe afoot, supporting himself by the money he received from his letters, all of which amounted to only five hundred dollars. These letters were afterwards published in a volume, under the title "Views Afoot." Travelling over the world and writing descriptions of his travels constituted an important part of Taylor's after life. He was at one time also connected with "The New York Tribune," in charge of its literary department. During the Civil War he was secretary to the Legation at St. Petersburg, and accomplished important results for his country in securing the friendship of Russia. At the time of his death he was United States minister to Germany. Taylor's first publication was a volume of poetry called "Ximena," issued in 1844. "Rhymes of Travel, Ballads, and Poems" appeared in 1848; and "Book of Romances, Lyrics, and Songs," in 1851. "Poems of the Orient," 1854, contains some of his most characteristic verse. "The Picture of St. John," 1866, is a narrative poem, its subject being an episode in the life of an artist. In 1870-1871 appeared his translation of Goethe's "Faust," which is likely to remain the standard English version. It is written in the same metres as the original, and probably comes as near as is possible to being a reproduction. Other volumes

of his poetry are "The Masque of the Gods," 1872; "Lars, a Pastoral of Norway," 1873; "The Prophet," a tragedy, 1874; "The National Ode," written for the Centennial Exposition, 1876; and "Prince Deucalion," 1878.

His works all show great poetical talent. He has richness of imagery and power in the management of sound. When we read his poems, we always praise them. But, for some reason, the people have never generally read them. There is nothing of Taylor's that has caught and held the popular attention like one or another of the poems of Poe, or of the chief members of the New England group. Perhaps it is because he did so many things well that he has never done anything with just that indescribable quality which carries a man's writing to the heart of the public. The following ballad is fairly representative of Taylor's work, and certainly deserves to be a popular favorite:

THE SONG OF THE CAMP

"Give us a song!" the soldiers cried,
The outer trenches guarding,
When the heated guns of the camps allied
Grew weary of bombarding.

The dark Redan, in silent scoff,
Lay, grim and threatening, under;
And the tawny mound of the Malakoff
No longer belched its thunder.

There was a pause. A guardsman said,
"We storm the forts to-morrow;
Sing while we may, another day
Will bring enough of sorrow."

They lay along the battery's side,
 Below the smoking cannon :
 Brave hearts, from Severn and from Clyde,
 And from the banks of Shannon.

They sang of love, and not of fame ;
 Forgot was Britain's glory :
 Each heart recalled a different name,
 But all sang "Annie Laurie."

Voice after voice caught up the song,
 Until its tender passion
 Rose like an anthem, rich and strong,—
 Their battle-eve confession.

Dear girl, her name he dared not speak,
 But, as the song grew louder,
 Something upon the soldier's cheek
 Washed off the stain of powder.

Beyond the darkening ocean burned
 The bloody sunset's embers,
 While the Crimean valleys learned
 How English love remembers.

And once again a fire of hell
 Rained on the Russian quarters,
 With scream of shot, and burst of shell,
 And bellowing of the mortars !

And Irish Nora's eyes are dim
 For a singer, dumb and gory ;
 And English Mary mourns for him
 Who sang of "Annie Laurie."

Sleep, soldiers ! still in honored rest
 Your truth and valor wearing ;
 The bravest are the tenderest,—
 The loving are the daring.

George
Henry
Boker,
1823-1890.

George Henry Boker is distinguished among American poets as the most successful, perhaps the

only successful, dramatist. We do not mean that, as poetical works, his dramas are superior to Taylor's or equal to Longfellow's. But they are poetical; and at the same time several of them, for example, "Calaynos" in England, and "Francesca da Rimini" in this country, have been produced with success upon the stage. Mr. Boker also published a volume of war poems, which are among the best of the poems called forth by the Civil War.

Thomas Buchanan Read was born in Pennsylvania, lived in Ohio and New York and in England, and died in New York. He was an artist with the brush as well as with the pen, and was self-educated in both lines of his activity. His portrait of Longfellow's daughters has been, as reproduced by photography, a very popular picture. His verse is spirited and full of fine passages. "Sheridan's Ride" disputes with "Barbara Frietchie" the place of the most successful ballad of the war.

Thomas
Buchanan
Read,
1822-1872.

Another group of verse-writers may be associated by the fact that a considerable part of their lives was spent in the western states, and their work shows, more or less, the influence of their surroundings.

The sisters Alice and Phœbe Cary were born in Ohio, and lived there until they had reached mature life, when they made their home in New York. They wrote verse which has been very popular, and some of which will live. It is devotional in spirit, pure and elevated in tone, and musical, though often showing technical faults. Phœbe Cary's hymn, "One Sweetly

Alice Cary,
1820-1871.

Phœbe Cary,
1824-1871.

Solemn Thought," has become one of the treasured possessions of religious spirits in all the English-speaking world.

Helen Hunt
Jackson,
1831-1885.

Helen Hunt Jackson (Helen Maria Fiske was her maiden name) wrote beautiful verses over the signature "H. H." The later years of her life were spent in Colorado, where she became greatly interested in the Indian question, and wrote books dealing with that subject, one of which will be considered in a later chapter. Her verses embody true and poetic ideas in correct and musical lines. "The Spinner" is one of the better known of her pieces; but for some years the columns of the papers to which she contributed were watched, and anything by "H. H." was sure of an eager welcome.

Edward
Rowland
Sill,
1841-1887.

Edward Rowland Sill was born in Connecticut and died in Ohio; but a considerable part of his short life was spent in California, as professor of English Literature in the State University. He gave promise of taking a very high place among our poets. He had just begun to show of what really great work he was capable. The thin volume of his poems contains some of the most strikingly original verse in our Literature. "The Fool's Prayer" and "Opportunity" are remarkable for the terse restrained power with which a great lesson is taught; and the former of these is regarded by many good judges as one of the most remarkable poems of the last fifty years of American verse.

THE FOOL'S PRAYER¹

The royal feast was done ; the King
 Sought some new sport to banish care,
 And to his jester cried : " Sir Fool,
 Kneel now, and make for us a prayer ! "

The jester doffed his cap and bells,
 And stood the mocking court before ;
 They could not see the bitter smile
 Behind the painted grin he wore.

He bowed his head, and bent his knee
 Upon the monarch's silken stool ;
 His pleading voice arose : " O Lord,
 Be merciful to me, a fool !

" No pity, Lord, could change the heart
 From red with wrong to white as wool ;
 The rod must heal the sin : but Lord,
 Be merciful to me, a fool !

" 'Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
 Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay ;
 'Tis by our follies that so long
 We hold the earth from heaven away.

" These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
 Go crushing blossoms without end ;
 These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
 Among the heart-strings of a friend.

" The ill-timed truth we might have kept —
 Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung !
 The word we had not sense to say —
 Who knows how grandly it had rung !

" Our faults no tenderness should ask,
 The chastening stripes must cleanse them all ;
 But for our blunders — oh, in shame
 Before the eyes of heaven we fall.

¹ Copyright, 1888, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

“Earth bears no balsam for mistakes;
 Men crown the knave, and scourge the fool,
 That did his will ; but Thou, O Lord,
 Be merciful to me, a fool ! ”

The room was hushed ; in silence rose
 The King, and sought his gardens cool,
 And walked apart, and murmured low,
 “Be merciful to me, a fool.”

Epic Verse. I have not found it practicable to hold closely to the three great classes of poetry in the arrangement of the writers of this period. There are examples of narrative poetry which may be classed under the Epic ; although, as was said in the introduction, it lacks some of the elements we usually associate with the great works which bear that title. Emerson’s verse is almost exclusively lyrical ; and so is that of Holmes. Longfellow wrote largely in the narrative style ; and we must put “Evangeline,” “Hiawatha,” “The Courtship of Miles Standish,” and “The Tales of a Wayside Inn” in the Epic class. So also with Lowell’s “Legend of Brittany” and “Sir Launfal.” It is difficult to classify “The Biglow Papers” by these divisions. The lyric element is strong in them ; and yet there is enough continuity of interest to suggest Epic qualities ; and there is some suggestion of the dramatic in the manner in which the characters are discriminated. I have spoken of Whittier’s “Snowbound” as an Idyll, which brings it under the general class of the Epic. Holland’s narrative poems, “Bittersweet,” “Kathrina,” and the “Mistress of the Manse” ; Aldrich’s “Wyndham Towers” and “Sisters’ Tragedy” ;

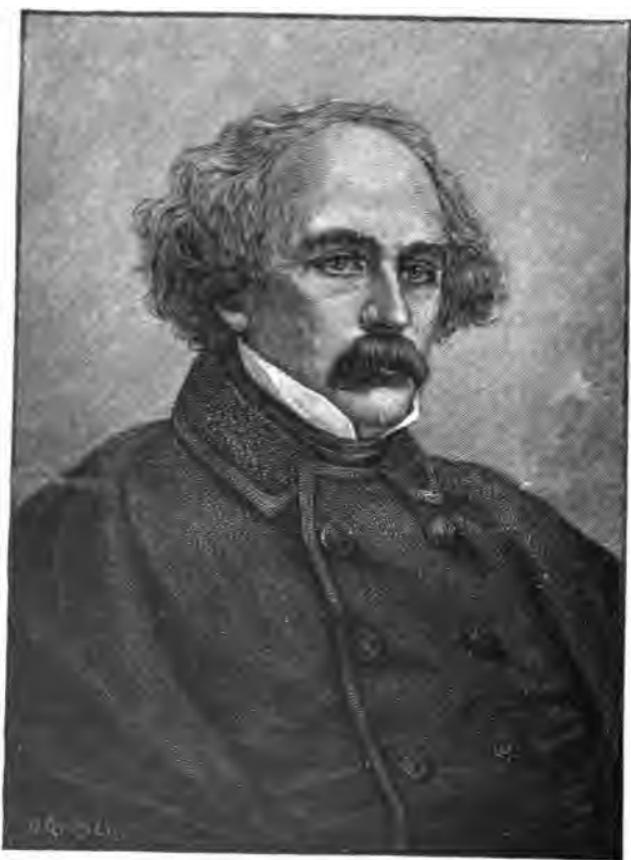
Stedman's "Alice of Monmouth" and "The Blameless Prince"; and several of Bayard Taylor's narrative poems, such as "The Picture of St. John" and "Lars," would also be classed here. There is abundance of the lyrical element; but that has been sufficiently indicated as we have passed along. It remains to inquire whether we have any true dramatic poetry in this period. I have pointed out the dramatic quality of "The Golden Legend," which constitutes a part of the trilogy "Christus." Longfellow early attempted the dramatic form in "The Spanish Student," and he left as his last extended work the dramatic poem "Michael Angelo." Bayard Taylor wrote "Prince Deucalion, a Lyrical Drama"; and George H. Boker's "Francesca da Rimini," and "Calaynos" have been already mentioned.

Dramatic
Verse.

QUESTIONS

What were the chief incidents in the life of Walt Whitman? What were the peculiar theories which he applied to verse; and what were some of the results of their application? What are the varying judgments of critics upon his writings? What are his chief publications? Note some of the peculiar characteristics of the lines from "O Vast Rondure." What are the especially striking phrases in "The Man-of-war Bird"? What poem shows that he could effectively use regular metre? Give some account of the life and poetical work of J. G. Holland. What special point of interest is there in the work of Emma Lazarus? Give some account of the lives of Stoddard, Aldrich, and Stedman, and point out peculiar qualities characteristic of the authors in the selections from their poems. What sad result of the Civil War upon the poetry of this period? Give some account of the lives and writings of Timrod and Hayne, and point out special qualities in the selections from

their poems. Give an outline of the life of Sidney Lanier. What were some of his publications other than verse? What is his theory of verse? What peculiar quality distinguishes his poetry? Note the illustrations of this peculiar quality in the extract from "The Marshes of Glynn." Point out the specially characteristic passages in the extract from "Corn," and in that from "The Symphony." Give some characteristic fact about each of the other writers named in this chapter. What Epic verse is there in the poetry of this period? What Dramatic verse?



Nathaniel Hawthorne.

CHAPTER XI

PERIOD OF THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1850-1880

NARRATIVE PROSE

THE various influences noticed in the introduction to the study of this period tended rather to the development of prose writing than to that of poetry. Our difficulty, henceforth, will be largely that of selection and condensation. It will be quite impossible, within reasonable limits, to name all the writers who, by their intrinsic merit, would deserve mention rather than some of those whose names will be found in the earlier chapters. All that one can hope to accomplish is to make the work representative. It is practically impossible to make it complete.

A writer of fiction who belongs, as to most of his work, to the previous period, but who is placed here because of his close association with Hawthorne, is Herman Melville. He is our best novelist of travel and sea life; and in one of his books has presented us with a type of life which otherwise is not represented in American fiction,—the life of a common sailor in the United States navy. "White Jacket," the book which presents this unique picture of life, is an interesting story; and is said to have been

Fiction.

Herman
Melville,
born in New
York, 1819;
died, 1891.

influential in securing the abolition of flogging, and suggesting other reforms in the management of our naval service. "Typee" and "Omoo" are tales of life in the islands of the Pacific; and are also unique in American fiction. Among Melville's writings are "Mardi," 1849; "Moby Dick," 1851; "Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War," 1866; and "Clarel," 1876. He was a warm friend of Hawthorne, and the two writers consulted and corresponded about their works.

Nathaniel
Hawthorne,
born in
Salem,
Massachu-
sets, 1804;
died, 1864.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was a descendant of William Hathorne, who came from England to Massachusetts in 1630, and who was a typical Puritan. His son, John Hathorne, was prominent in Salem during the witchcraft excitement, and as judge condemned some of the unhappy victims to death. There is a legend that one of these victims cursed his judge before he went to his death; a legend that naturally suggested the similar incident in "The House of the Seven Gables."

Hawthorne was a delicate child; and a serious injury kept him from school for two years, during which enforced retirement he studied privately with Dr. J. E. Worcester, the famous dictionary-maker. This confinement doubtless strengthened his natural disposition to shyness of manner. It also led to a good deal of reading and brooding over what he read. Three books had a strong influence in forming his literary style. They are Spenser's "Faerie Queene," Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," and "The Newgate Calendar." The delicate fancy, the pro-

found interest in religious and moral questions, and the strong tendency to study the morbid aspects of character, or the working of crime and sin in human nature, are certainly three prominent characteristics of his work; and they can be clearly traced to these sources in his early reading. A part of his boyhood was spent at Raymond, on Sebago Lake, in Maine, in a wild, thinly settled country; but he returned to Salem to prepare for college. In 1821 he entered Bowdoin, where Longfellow and Horatio Bridge were among his classmates, and where his most intimate friend — a friendship which endured through life — was Franklin Pierce, afterwards President of the United States. Bridge was always a friend and adviser in literary work; and Longfellow wrote the first appreciative review of Hawthorne's writings. We have already noticed their mutual relation to "Evangeline." After graduating from college, Hawthorne returned to Salem. Having a little property, he was not compelled at once to enter upon professional life. He felt that his vocation was Literature; but he was long in securing the ear of the public. "Fanshawe," a romance, was published in 1828, but its success was slight, and Hawthorne did not feel encouraged by it. He did some literary hack work for "Peter Parley" (S. G. Goodrich) for which his remuneration was not large. Some of his stories and sketches appeared in the "Token," one of the "Annuals" referred to in the chapter introductory to this period. Hawthorne tells us that he spent a large part of this time writing stories

in the daytime and burning them at night. Some of the Tales in the "Token" attracted the attention of a family of accomplished ladies in Salem, and led to Hawthorne's acquaintance with them. One of these ladies, Miss Sophia Peabody, afterwards became his wife. In 1836 the first series of "Twice-told Tales" was published, Hawthorne's friend, Horatio Bridge, assuming the pecuniary risk; and this was moderately successful, some six thousand copies being sold. He held the position of weigher and gauger in the Boston custom-house, while George Bancroft was collector of the port; but when the Whigs came into power in 1841, he was turned out of office, and this led to his brief connection with the Brook Farm community. The year 1841 saw

"Grand-father's Chair," 1841.

the publication of "Grandfather's Chair" and "Famous Old People," stories of old New England history, told for children; and in 1843 appeared "The Liberty Tree," with "Last Words of Grandfather's Chair," "Biographical Stories for Children," and an enlarged edition of the "Twice-told Tales." Meanwhile he was married and went to Concord, to live in the "Old Manse," where Emerson had been born and where "Nature" had been written. Some years of ideally happy life followed, the literary fruit of which is found in "Mosses from an Old Manse," which appeared in 1846. Hawthorne was now recognized as a writer of original genius; but the pecuniary returns from his work were still small, and he was glad to accept an appointment to the post of sur-

"Mosses from an Old Manse," 1846.

veyor in the Salem custom-house. We should be grateful to the Democratic party of that day for thus caring for the necessities of genius, especially as the three years of his stay in Salem resulted in the production of his masterpiece, and what is probably, all things considered, the greatest work of imaginative prose in American Literature. Hawthorne published "The Scarlet Letter," with slight hope as to its popular success, feeling that the rather gloomy tone of the book might be a hindrance. To James T. Fields is due the credit of perceiving its singular power and beauty, and insisting upon its publication. It was one of the instant and great successes of our literary history, the first edition, of five thousand copies, selling within two weeks. "The Scarlet Letter" appeared in 1850. The summer of that year, Hawthorne went to live at Lenox, Berkshire County, Massachusetts; and here followed a busy time. The year 1851 saw the publication of "The Wonder Book," a delightful collection of classical myths told for modern children; "True Stories"; "The Snow Image and Other Twice-told Tales"; and "The House of the Seven Gables," which Hawthorne himself considered the best of his books. In the autumn of that year, he removed to West Newton, near Boston, and there wrote "The Blithedale Romance," which, although he disclaims any specific detailed connection between its characters and incidents and those of Brook Farm, is yet plainly a reflection of that experience of his life. In 1852 he returned to Concord and made his home at "The

"The Scarlet
Letter," 1850.

"The House
of the Seven
Gables,"
1851.

"The
Blithedale
Romance,"
1852.

Wayside." This was the year of the presidential election when his friend Franklin Pierce was chosen President; and Hawthorne, who was always a loyal friend, wrote the campaign life of the candidate. "Tanglewood Tales," a second series of "The Wonder Book," was written in the following winter, and the next spring, Hawthorne sailed for Liverpool, having been appointed to the Consulate by President Pierce. To the years of life abroad to which this appointment led, we owe "The Marble Faun," in some respects the most finished and powerful of his works, and "Our Old Home," a collection of sketches of English scenes and experiences. He again illustrated the loyalty of his friendship by insisting upon dedicating this book to Ex-President Pierce, who in the swift movement of events and in the near approach of the war had become intensely unpopular. Hawthorne's publishers thought the dedication would injure the sale of the book; but the author insisted that it was the only suitable dedication, and would not withdraw it. It was in the companionship of this same tried and true friend, his last hours soothed and comforted by his kindly helpfulness, that Hawthorne died; and it suggests interesting reflections as to the comparative value of different sorts of success, that one who for four years held the highest place of political preferment in his country's gift probably has his best assurance of enduring remembrance in the fact that he was the novelist's friend. The unpublished papers of few authors have been so freely given to the world as have those of Hawthorne.

"The Marble
Faun," 1860.

Ideas for romances dealing with the fancy of an elixir of life, and with the legend of an ancestral footstep, had been floating in his mind for years; and had taken several tentative forms. He seems to have at last settled upon the final form in which he wished to develop these ideas, in "The Dolliver Romance," the opening chapter of which was published in the "Atlantic Monthly," the year of his death. More or less complete sketches of stories dealing with these ideas were found among his papers, and were published; "Septimus Felton," in 1871, and "Dr. Grimshawe's Secret," in 1883. It seems a pity that the artistic completeness of Hawthorne's work should be marred by the inclusion of these unfinished stories. He kept full and interesting memoranda, at different periods of his life, and from these there have been published, "Passages from American Note-Books," 1868; "Passages from English Note-Books," 1870; and "Passages from French and Italian Note-Books," 1871. For a man who was extremely shy, who shrank from publicity with extraordinary modesty, and who, it is understood, expressly forbade the writing of any biography, Hawthorne's desk and closet have been thrown open to the public with extraordinary frankness. The result is in many respects delightful. The man's absolute purity and innate refinement and magnanimity make all such revelations helpful and inspiring to the reader. It is of intense interest, also, to look into the literary workshop of a great genius, as, by these posthumous publications, one is enabled to do.

The ethical motive is very strong in Hawthorne's work. His four great romances are all studies of sin in various aspects. In "The Scarlet Letter," the different effects of confessed and hidden guilt are contrasted. The suffering of the woman, with her guilt proclaimed to the world, and wearing the badge of her shame upon her bosom and seeing it constantly before her in the form of her innocent child, is less than that of the man, honored by the world as the ideal of holiness, but carrying the same red badge of shame burned in upon his heart. In "The House of the Seven Gables," the weight of an inheritance of ill-gotten gain rests upon a family in all its generations; and the corrupting influence of greed for gold and power is awfully portrayed in the leading character of the book. The moral lesson of "The Blithedale Romance" is not so clear. The danger, that is, the moral danger, of an unregulated enthusiasm may be taken to be the underlying thought. The reformer is almost inevitably an egotist. A powerful personality, like that of Hollingsworth, draws other personalities within the sweep of its influence. Though seeking unselfish and noble aims, there is danger that such a personality may work ruin to minds and souls who yield to his influence without really entering into his plans. And there is danger, too, that his absorption in his great purposes, accompanied by disregard for the precious and fragile spirits with whom he is brought into touch, may develop a self-absorption scarcely distinguishable from the coarsest selfishness.

"The Marble Faun" discusses the problem, always fascinating and baffling to those who believe in a personal God, of the origin and ultimate meaning of moral evil. The suggested interpretation of it as a means toward higher development of character than could be possible in a state of innocence, is not peculiar to Hawthorne. The mode in which it is suggested, however, by the contrast and comparison of the faun-like Donatello with the complex nature of Miriam, and by the effect upon them both of their community in crime, is thoroughly original. Modern thinking along evolutionary lines has greatly strengthened Hawthorne's view; and it is interesting to speculate how that subtle intellect and delicate fancy would have used the suggestions sure to have reached him from the scientific thought of the last thirty years.

Hawthorne's use of the English language is by all critics conceded to be masterly. There is a delicate charm in the words and sentences very difficult, if not impossible, to analyze. There is a satisfied feeling as we read that the word is the best possible word, and the form of sentence the most perfectly suited to the thought. But there are none of the tricks of style which characterize some great writers, such as Carlyle and Ruskin. Take, for example, a short passage from "The Scarlet Letter," Chapter XV, and note some of the characteristics of the style.

Pearl, whose activity of spirit never flagged, had been at no loss for amusement while her mother talked with the old

gatherer of herbs. At first, as already told, she had flirted fancifully with her own image in a pool of water, beckoning the phantom forth, and — as it declined to venture — seeking a passage for herself into its sphere of impalpable earth and unattainable sky. Soon finding, however, that either she or the image was unreal, she turned elsewhere for better pastime. She made little boats out of birch-bark, and freighted them with snail-shells, and sent out more ventures on the mighty deep than any merchant in New England ; but the larger part of them foundered near the shore. She seized a live horseshoe by the tail, and made prize of several five fingers, and laid out a jelly-fish to melt in the warm sun. Then she took up the white foam, that streaked the line of the advancing tide, and threw it upon the breeze, scampering after it, with winged footsteps, to catch the great snowflakes ere they fell. Perceiving a flock of beach-birds that fed and fluttered along the shore, the naughty child picked up her apron full of pebbles, and, creeping from rock to rock after these small sea-fowl, displayed remarkable dexterity in pelting them. One little gray bird, with a white breast, Pearl was almost sure, had been hit by a pebble, and fluttered away with a broken wing. But then the elf-child sighed, and gave up her sport ; because it grieved her to have done harm to a little being that was as wild as the sea-breeze, or as wild as Pearl herself.

Her final employment was to gather sea-weed of various kinds, and make herself a scarf or mantle, and a head-dress, and thus assume the aspect of a little mermaid. She inherited her mother's gift for devising drapery and costume. As the last touch to her mermaid's garb, Pearl took some eel-grass, and imitated, as best she could, on her own bosom, the decoration with which she was so familiar on her mother's. A letter, — the letter A, — but freshly green, instead of scarlet ! The child bent her chin upon her breast, and contemplated this device with strange interest; even as if the one only thing

for which she had been sent into the world was to make out its hidden import.

It is difficult to imagine how more incidents that reveal character could have been crowded into two short paragraphs. Self-consciousness, in watching her image in the pool; vigorous fancy, in the little birch-bark boats; running to the extreme of weirdness in her flinging up the foam, and trying to catch it; recklessness of pain to others in her pelting the birds; and the inconsistent regret, when she found that she had wounded one; and at last the perverse ingenuity of fancy, which makes her wring the mother's heart by copying the scarlet letter. Now the notable point, as to style, is the condensed force with which all this is put before us. It is a marvellously clear and strong picture in words, where every word tells, and there is not a word too much. Notice the adjectives, "impalpable" earth, and "unattainable" sky, and see how much they suggest. Notice the delicate humor in the use of the trite phrase "mighty deep." See how the commonplace is combined with the romantic in the words "scampering after it with winged footsteps"; and so the curiously complex character of the child suggested. Transparently clear the style is all the way through. The sentences are varied in length, but never very long. There is not a periodic sentence in the selection. Clearness is the most prominent characteristic; and yet there is a subtle suggestiveness in the words employed, which makes every sentence

like the vision Pearl saw in the pool : "a picture of an impalpable earth and an unattainable sky."

Hawthorne's life and work seem outside of the active currents of his time. He looked on at the tumultuous religious and political movements of the period as one who had no real mission in connection with them, his thoughts going backward and forward into the eternities. A true daughter of the time in which she lived, on the other hand, was Harriet Beecher Stowe. While she was still a child, the family moved from Connecticut to Cincinnati, Ohio, where her father, Dr. Lyman Beecher, was pastor of a Presbyterian church and president of Lane Theological Seminary. Here Harriet was associated with her sister Catherine in teaching, and compiled a school geography, which was extensively used. In 1836 she married Professor Calvin E. Stowe. While living in Cincinnati she was necessarily brought into close contact with slavery, which existed then in the neighboring state of Kentucky. The Ohio River being the boundary line between slave and free soil, she not unfrequently saw fugitives from slavery, and sometimes helped them on their way to Canada. In this way her theoretical interest in the question of slavery was made practical. In 1843 "The Mayflower," a volume of sketches of descendants of the Pilgrims, was published. In 1850 Professor Stowe accepted a position in Bowdoin College at Brunswick, Maine; and this was their home for several years. Mrs. Stowe's feelings on the subject of slavery had been wrought up to great intensity by her

Harriet
Beecher
Stowe, born
in Connecti-
cut, 1811;
died, 1896.

observation of the workings of the "Fugitive Slave Law," which went into effect during the latter part of her residence in Ohio. Out of much brooding over this subject, and from a fiery conviction that the people of the Northern States ought to know the facts as to slavery, was born the book which has probably had the widest influence of all works of fiction. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was published first in the "National Era," an antislavery weekly paper issued in Washington, D.C. The story attracted wide attention as it came out from week to week; and when it was published in book form, in 1852, its popularity was unprecedented. A half million of copies were sold within five years. Versions of the book in more than eighteen different languages have been collected. After more than forty years it is still a widely selling and widely read book. If such results are achieved without real literary art, as has sometimes been said, the fact would suggest some curious reflections about the value and meaning of art. While the book shows in passages the signs of hasty composition, and consequent crudeness, it has in abundance the great qualities of narrative and descriptive writing. It is a clear, vivid, strong story, from beginning to end. Some of its episodes, as Eliza's escape and the flight of the fugitives in Ohio, are among the best pieces of condensed, strong narration in the language. It has three immortal characters,—Uncle Tom, Topsy, and Miss Ophelia; and the minor characters—Mr. Shelby, St. Clair, Eliza Harris, and little Eva—are

"Uncle
Tom's
Cabin," 1852.

far from being the juiceless lay figures of Cooper's stories. A characteristic of the book to which justice has scarcely been done, is its moderation. Considered as an avowed purpose novel, frankly written to arouse the people of America to appreciate the evils of slavery, this is remarkable. No defender of the institution ever described its gentler forms as perfectly as did Mrs. Stowe in her picture of the Shelby farm in Kentucky, and the St. Clair household in New Orleans; and that such incidents as the death of Tom, and that such characters as the trader and Legree did exist, no one has ventured to deny. Had Mrs. Stowe represented them as frequent or common, she might have been accused of injustice. But she has carefully portrayed them as the extreme results of an evil system.

The fame and pecuniary returns of this great success led to an interesting journey abroad, some of the incidents and impressions of which were recorded in "Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands," published in 1854. About this time Professor Stowe removed to Andover, Massachusetts, and for ten years this was their home. In 1856 "Dred"—sometimes published under the title, "Nina Gordon"—was written. It attempted a repetition of "Uncle Tom"; but must be set down as a failure, like most repetitions. In 1859 she published what will probably stand as the most finished and artistic production of her pen, "The Minister's Wooing." It is a story of the time immediately after the Revolution; the scene is laid in Newport, Rhode Island, and the lead-

ing character is the great theologian of the doctrine of unselfishness, Dr. Samuel Hopkins. In 1864 Mrs. Stowe's home was moved to Hartford, Connecticut; and for the rest of her life she divided her time between that pleasant city and a winter residence in Florida. I will not attempt a complete list of her publications, which were very numerous. The most important novels are "The Pearl of Orr's Island" and "Agnes of Sorrento," both of which appeared in 1862. But probably beside "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "The Minister's Wooing" will be placed by posterity "Oldtown Folks," which was published in 1869. It is slight, considered as a story, but as a character study, her strongest work, and one of the strongest in our Literature. Sam Lawson takes his place beside Miss Ophelia as one of the supremely good reproductions in Literature of the old-fashioned Yankee. Mrs. Stowe was a voluminous and acceptable contributor to the periodical Literature of the time, and published a volume of religious poems of a sweet devotional character.

Comparable, in its effect, to "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is "Ramona," by Helen Hunt Jackson, which appeared in 1884. "Ramona" was an outcome of the Western movement of population, and the contact with the Indian tribes thus occasioned. Mrs. Jackson's spirit was moved by the wrongs the Indian suffered from the white man, as Mrs. Stowe had been moved by slavery; and she, too, put her whole soul into her book. It was eloquently written; and it moved the conscience of the people on the subject.

"H. H."
Jackson,
"Ramona,"
1884.

It may fairly be reckoned as having contributed largely to the partial solution of the Indian problem which the last twenty years have brought about.

Oliver
Wendell
Holmes,
"Elsie
Vanner,"
1861.

Dr. Holmes' versatility of talent is displayed in the three excellent novels which he published. "Elsie Venner," 1861, first appeared as "The Professor's Story," in the "*Atlantic Monthly*." Six years later, 1867, "The Guardian Angel" was published; and in 1885 the freshness of his young spirit, at the age of seventy-six, bubbled over in his latest novel, "A Mortal Antipathy." The "Doctor" appears in these books more plainly than in any other of his non-professional writings. They are all illustrations of his theories as to inherited tendencies. Witty, humorous, and full of wise suggestion they are, of course. But the characterization is too much weighted with the theory to be perfectly convincing.

John Esten
Cooke,
1830-1886.

Particularly associated with the Civil War, are, on the Southern side, John Esten Cooke, and on the Northern, Theodore Winthrop. Mr. Cooke published a large number of romances of Southern life. He himself felt that his work lacked reality, and acknowledged that the newer school of writers had rightly crowded him from the field. Perhaps the yet more recent revival of romanticism may bring his books again into vogue. His work, like that of Simms, has an enduring value as illustrative of the social conditions among which he lived. Some of his stories are "Leather Stocking and Silk," "The Virginia Comedians," "Surrey of Eagle's Nest," "Fairfax," "Hilt to Hilt." One of his latest publications

was "My Lady Pocahontas," in which the famous old Virginia romance was gracefully worked over.

Theodore Winthrop was killed in one of the earliest battles of the war. He had written several sketches of American life, which gave promise of brilliant work to follow. "Cecil Dreeme," "Edwin Brothertoft," and "John Brent" are the titles of his published novels.

Theodore
Winthrop,
1828-1861.

William Mumford Baker was a Presbyterian minister in Texas, who, during the progress of the war, wrote "Inside, a Chronicle of Secession," in some respects one of the most interesting productions of the period. "His Majesty Myself" was published anonymously, and attracted favorable attention as a strong character study. Mr. Baker had imaginative power, and his conceptions of character are vigorous and original. His stories are clumsily constructed, however, and his style is often obscure. Among his later works are "The New Timothy"; "Mose Evans," a story of the "Reconstruction" period; and "Carter Quarterman."

William
Mumford
Baker,
1825-1883.

Bayard Taylor's great versatility of talent has been mentioned. He displayed it, among other ways, by publishing three of the best novels of the period. "John Godfrey's Fortunes," 1864, is a leaf out of his own experience. "Hannah Thurston," 1863, and "The Story of Kennet," 1866, are pictures of life and manners in Pennsylvania. They are of particular interest as presenting a type of life not nearly so well represented in fiction as those of New England and New York.

Bayard
Taylor.

Josiah
Gilbert
Holland.

Dr. Josiah Gilbert Holland published a number of stories which had a wide sale, and stand on about the same literary plane as his poetry. "Arthur Bonnycastle," "Seven Oaks," and "Nicholas Minturn" are the names of some of the better known of his novels.

Edward
Everett
Hale,
born 1822.

Edward Everett Hale, in connection with his multifarious labors as preacher, journalist, and general instructor of the people, has had time to write some of the best stories of the period. Three of them, at least, are likely to remain as permanent additions to Literature. "The Man Without a Country" was one of the strongest influences for stimulating patriotism in the time of the Civil War, when patriotism was most needed, and is a profoundly pathetic story. "In His Name" and "Ten Times One Is Ten" are two others of his better known tales.

Hjalmar
Hjorth
Boyesen,
1848-1896.

Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen, as the form of his name would indicate, was a Norwegian. He had acquired, however, a fine mastery of the English language. "Gunnar," published in 1874, is a romance of Norwegian life, of very delicate beauty. . He, in later years, wrote a number of powerful realistic sketches, dealing with life among the Scandinavian emigrants to this country. He was professor of Germanic Literatures at Columbia College, and published, besides his works of fiction, a large number of historical and critical writings.

Constance
Fenimore
Woolson,
1838-1894.

Constance Fenimore Woolson is one of the best of our later writers of fiction. She wrote powerful realistic stories, mainly of life in the Southern

States since the war. "Castle Nowhere," "Rodman the Keeper," "Anne," "For the Major," "East Angels," "Jupiter Lights," "Horace Chase," are some of the titles.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich has carried into the writing of fiction the same delicate finish of style which characterizes his verse. He has published three strong novels: "Prudence Palfrey," "The Stillwater Tragedy," and "The Queen of Sheba"; besides one of the most popular of juveniles, "The Story of a Bad Boy," and some volumes of short stories.

Thomas
Bailey
Aldrich.

John Townsend Trowbridge is an older man and writer than many of those discussed in this period; but he belongs to the present. He is very difficult to classify. Probably his most important literary work has been as a writer of stories for boys. He has also published a good deal of very good verse. "Neighbor Jackwood" has been called the pioneer novel of New England life; but this judgment leaves out of account Miss Sedgwick's work. Trowbridge has published a large number of stories, some of the war times and some of earlier days. He knows the heart of a boy; and his work is always wholesome.

John Towns-
end Trow-
bridge,
born 1827.

A pioneer, in the realistic local novel, was Edward Eggleston. He placed his stories in the great central states of Indiana and Illinois, in their pioneer days. "The Hoosier Schoolmaster" came to the reading public, in 1871, as a fresh sensation. The characters were racy and individual, the dialect was

Edward
Eggleston,
born 1837.

characteristic but not unintelligible, and the phase of life presented was not so far removed from that familiar to most readers as were the scenes and characters portrayed by Cable and by Miss Murfree, and yet had a very interesting quality of its own. "The End of the World," set in the same region, dealt with the great excitement caused by the "Millerite" delusion that the world was immediately to be destroyed. In "The Graysons," the early career of Abraham Lincoln is effectively introduced. A later essay in fiction is a story of life in New York City, called "The Faith Doctor." He has, of late years, devoted himself to minute historical studies in the early years of American History.

Louisa May
Alcott,
1832-1888.

Among the great multitude of writers of Juvenile Literature, I select for special mention here Louisa May Alcott, as on the whole the best representative of the tendencies of this form of Literature. She was the daughter of A. B. Alcott, and the home at Concord owed everything to her busy pen. "Little Women," which appeared in two series in 1868 and 1869, took the hearts of American girls by storm; and was followed by "An Old-fashioned Girl," "Little Men," "Jo's Boys," and other books which have been only less widely read. What especially distinguishes these books, and others of the later period, from those of Jacob Abbot, is the effort to portray child character, entering in many cases into careful, moral, and religious analysis. In Miss Alcott's books this is done with ability, and the character is very distinct and clearly drawn. It is a

question, however, whether the earlier, simpler type of book may not have been quite as wholesome reading for immature minds.

We notice a marked change in the fiction of this period, as compared with that of the previous one. The two great names are distinguished, the one for subtle thought on great moral and metaphysical problems, the other for intense interest in the great social questions of the day. There is nothing like this in Cooper or his contemporaries. The mastery of the means of expression is far greater. Hawthorne's English is, of course, incomparable; but the minor writers of the period excel, in this respect, the best of the earlier time. The tendency toward "Realism" is marked; although it has not yet reached its full height. Incident is more probable; character is more like the character we know; and both are portrayed with greater clearness, simplicity, and force than by the earlier writers. As the American poetry of our first century reached its culmination in the New England poets, so American fiction reached its culmination in Hawthorne. In the following period we shall find the average writing of a higher quality than the average of this, but no such transcendent genius as the author of "*The Scarlet Letter*."

Richard Hildreth, an active and influential journalist and political writer, published, in the years 1849-1852, a valuable "History of the United States." While this work never attained the general reputation that was gained by Bancroft's History, and has not

History.

Richard
Hildreth,
1807-1865.

the fascinating style of Prescott, it will always be a standard for the study of the period of which it treats.

**John Gorham Palfrey,
1796-1881.**

John Gorham Palfrey was at one time a leader in the antislavery movement; it was in advocacy of his election to office that Emerson once made political speeches. But the chief interest of his life was in historical studies; and the "History of New England," issued at irregular intervals from 1880 to 1890, is the chief monument of his labors. It is a great treasure-house of historical materials; and will doubtless be the source of many slighter and more readable works.

**James Parton,
1822-1891.**

One of the most popular writers of this time was James Parton. He had an admirable style. His work is always interesting. He is clear, forcible, and often elegant in his language. He wrote biographies of many of our famous public men, and of Voltaire. The latter is the work on which he apparently bestowed the greatest labor; and it shows the strongest qualities of excellence.

**Ulysses Simpson Grant,
1822-1885.**

Many of the leading actors in the great events of the Civil War, and the political movements connected with it, wrote memoirs of their lives, which had wide reading, and are invaluable sources for the future historian. Among these, the "Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant" has become a part of our Literature. It has the concise fulness, the direct movement, the suppression of irrelevant details, and the complete, vivid portrayal of what is essential, that constitute strong narrative writing. Combined with these are a clear unbiassed judgment of men and events and





J. R. Moxley.

a dry humor that give great charm to the book. High authorities have said that it will take its place, in the libraries of the future, beside Cæsar's "Commentaries." But to be sure of that, we would need to see a thousand years ahead. What we know now is that it is a very interesting book, and one that every American boy ought to read.

We have two historical writers in this period, whom we may place beside Bancroft and Prescott, as among the great historians in the English Language.

John Lothrop Motley was graduated from Harvard College in 1831, and pursued further studies at the universities of Berlin and Göttingen. At the latter university a fellow-student and comrade was the famous Bismarck, who remained his intimate friend through life. Motley made two not very successful efforts at novel writing, and had a rather discouraging experience in the Massachusetts legislature, before he finally decided to devote himself to historical study and writing. He selected as his special field the history of Holland; and realizing that he was thus coming very near to Prescott's domain, he visited him, and they talked the matter over in the friendliest manner. The result is that while their work is to some extent complementary, they approach the contest between Spain and Holland from different points of view; and Prescott's works become an indispensable preparation for the full appreciation of Motley's, while the writings of the latter give us just the completion of Prescott's story that we desire. Motley devoted ten years of study to the preparation

John
Lothrop
Motley, born
in Massachusetts, 1814;
died in England, 1877.

"Rise of the Dutch Republic," 1856.

of his "History of the Rise of the Dutch Republic." It is one of the remarkable incidents in the history of Literature that he found considerable difficulty in securing an English publisher, Murray declining it, and the work being issued in 1856, at the author's expense, by John Chapman. It was triumphantly successful with the general public, and was welcomed by historians and critics in America and Europe as a standard work in its field.

"History of the United Netherlands," 1860-1868.

In 1860 he published two volumes of the "History of the United Netherlands," which fully sustained the reputation gained by the "Dutch Republic." Then followed the stormy time of the Civil War. President Lincoln appointed Motley United States minister to Austria; and he held the office till 1867, when he resigned. In the meantime, although active in his official duties, he had continued his historical studies; and in 1868 published the two concluding volumes of the "History of the United Netherlands." President Grant appointed him to the English Mission; and one of the yet unexplained mysteries of politics is his recall in 1870. The "Life and Death of John of Barneveldt" appeared in 1874. It was a biographical study intended to be introductory to the "History of the Thirty Years' War," which was to be the crowning work of Motley's career. But his health was now permanently shattered, and in 1877 he died at the home of his daughter Lady Harcourt, near Dorchester, England; a rather singular coincidence, as his birthplace was Dorchester, then a suburb of Boston.

"John of Barneveldt," 1874.

Motley's histories are accurate and trustworthy, but not strictly impartial. His strong sympathy with the Dutch as against the Spanish, and with the Protestants as against the Romanists, is never disguised. But the history is nevertheless perfectly fair. His sympathy does not betray him into misrepresentation. He does not attempt the work of a cool, unimpassioned judge. He is a generous, fair-minded advocate. This gives his work a peculiar warmth of interest. His pictorial power is remarkable. The leading characters are vividly described; and many passages of his histories are more fascinating than some romances.

Francis Parkman led a much less eventful life. He was also graduated from Harvard, in 1844; studied law but did not practise long; spent some years in exploring the Northwest, thus permanently destroying his health, but obtaining in the process much of the material for his life-work. He devoted himself to the study of the rise, progress, and fall of the French power in North America. It is a fascinating field of study, supplying, in the adventures of the explorers and missionaries, some of the greatest instances of self-sacrificing courage on record; and dealing with the contest between Teutonic and Latin ideas, on whose decision the fate of the continent depended. In pursuit of his studies he spent some time in France; but otherwise his life was quiet, and without incidents of interest. He first published an account of his travels in the Northwest, calling the book "The California and Oregon Trail." This

Francis
Parkman,
born in
Massachu-
setts, 1823;
died, 1893.

appeared in 1849. His historical works were published at varying intervals, during the rest of his life. "The History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac," 1851, was the first; and "A Half-Century of Conflict," 1893, the last. They take up different aspects and episodes of the long story; as, "Pioneers of France in the New World," 1865, "The Jesuits in North America," 1867, "Montcalm and Wolfe," 1884, and others. Each work is complete in itself, and together they form a complete account of a phase of history not generally familiar, but exceedingly important, and abounding in the most picturesque and exciting incidents. Parkman's style is the perfection of historical narrative. He is more impartial than Motley. While his sympathies are strongly with his own race, the story is to a great extent that of the relations of the French with the Indians; and, so far, does not involve his national feeling. And the gallantry of the French adventurers and the incredible devotion of the Jesuit missionaries, with their self-sacrificing courage, compel the admiration of the most intense Anglo-Saxon or the most fervent Protestant. His style is not so pictorial as that of Motley; events and characters are presented more in the white light of reality. But it is clear and forcible; and he knows so well how to give the results of his studies without intruding the processes upon us, that the story seems to be enacted before us as we read.

QUESTIONS

Describe the writings of Herman Melville.

Give some of the facts of the early life of Nathaniel Hawthorne. What was his connection with the "Brook Farm" community? What were some of his earliest publications? When was "The Scarlet Letter" written? What were his later works? Give an analysis of the ethical teaching of his most important books. What is the quality of his style? Point out the illustrations of some of the special beauties of Hawthorne in the selection from "The Scarlet Letter."

What were the chief events of Mrs. Stowe's earlier life? What were some of her early writings? Out of what public agitation did "Uncle Tom's Cabin" arise? What are some of its chief characteristics as a narrative? What were the most important of Mrs. Stowe's later works? Characterize briefly the other writers of fiction mentioned. Of what type of writing was Edward Eggleston a pioneer? In general, what changes are to be noted in the fiction of this period as compared with that of the former? Characterize briefly the first four historical writers mentioned. What was Motley's public career? What were his chief historical works? What is his style as a historian? What was Parkman's field of historical study? Compare his style with that of Motley.

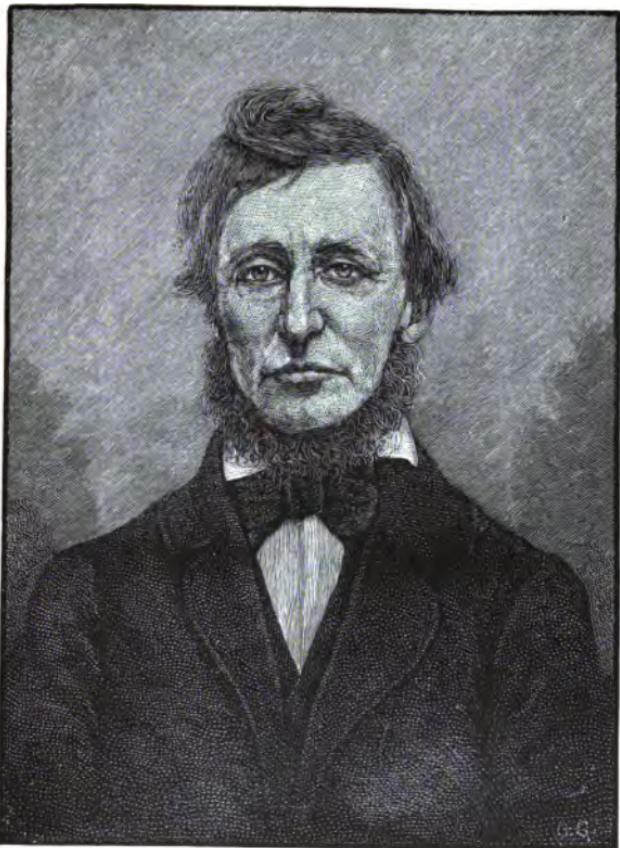
CHAPTER XII

PERIOD OF THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1850-1880

PROSE. EXPOSITION

IN this period, expository writing, especially in the form of the essay, reaches a position of great importance. Some of the strongest work done by our writers during these years is in this class. The number of those who have gained distinction, and whose work deserves to be remembered, is so large that it is difficult to treat them with any satisfactory approach to completeness, without falling into the catalogue style. Doubtless time will sift the heap; and the student fifty years hence will not find so many names to trouble him. But the judgments of the future cannot be anticipated; and the best that can be done is to group the authors, and gain some idea of their relative merits and importance. Naturally we begin with the very interesting group of the "Transcendentalists," with the two names at its head, so different in their suggestions, and yet equally certain always to be memorable names in our literary history, Emerson and Thoreau.

Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson's fame rests more securely upon his "Essays" than upon his poetry. As has been inti-



Henry D. Thoreau.



mated, his verse is sometimes metrical and rimed philosophy. It is often also true that his prose is very poetic in its quality. And the poetic quality does not injure the prose, as the prosaic quality sometimes spoils the verse. The "Essays" have influenced other writers far more than the poems have influenced other poets. There have always been a great many little men—as Lowell, in the "Fable for Critics," says about one man—trying to make their short legs cover Emerson's mighty stride; and the effect is sometimes ludicrous. Aside from this *pseudo*-influence, Emerson's prose work has been a great power. The most earnest and thoughtful spirits have read it and brooded over it. It has given texts for thousands of lay sermons. It has been one of the most germinant influences in our American thinking.

It might be said that Emerson "struck twelve" the first time; for "Nature," which appeared in 1836, is unexcelled in all the qualities which give greatness to his work. There had already been printed a "Right-hand-of-Fellowship" discourse, 1830; and a "Historical Discourse" at Concord, 1835. He had also, the same year, delivered a course of "Lectures on Biography," two of which were published in the "North American Review." But "Nature" was the first real Emersonian message to the world. His address on "The American Scholar," 1837, Lowell speaks of as our intellectual declaration of independence. It did for critical, speculative thought in America what Cooper, Irving, and Poe accomplished for other forms of Literature. It set an American

standard, so that the American critic could henceforth stand upon his own feet. This is one of the notable qualities of Emerson's thinking. He is serenely confident in his own judgments. With the most profound reverence for the great spirits of Literature, he judged them all from the point of view of our present needs. He had supreme faith in the present and in the future. All his interest and faith in the past but strengthened his confidence in the present. This cannot justly be said to flow from "egotism." It rested on his belief in God, as now present with men; in inspiration as a present power. This is a doctrine which might easily, and as held by weaker spirits often has, run into fanaticism. But there is always a saving grain of the salt of common sense in Emerson, which prevents that result.

After "Nature" and "The American Scholar" had been published, there was always a large public for anything that Emerson might write; not large enough to make him rich, but large enough to give him a feeling of security in the literary life. The "Essays," First Series, appeared in 1841; and the Second Series in 1844; "Representative Men," 1850; "English Traits," 1856; "The Conduct of Life," 1860; and "Society and Solitude," 1870. Emerson's philosophy was one of the great influences for the revival of "Platonism." It represented the extreme reaction from the Deistic materialism of the Eighteenth Century. His thinking did for America what Wordsworth and Coleridge did for England. He is often compared with Carlyle; but the compari-

son is largely misleading. They were far more contrasted than alike. There is not a trace of the bitter, destructive, denunciatory spirit in Emerson. Opposing conditions or opinions did not fret him. He seemed either to rise above or to withdraw himself from what was unsympathetic. He is serenely optimistic. It is often difficult to discover what his views are; but his spirit is unmistakable. And it is by the influence of the spirit of his writings that he makes his impression on our spirits.

Emerson's style is one to enjoy and admire; but not one to imitate, or even to study as a model. It has the effect of obscurity, sometimes, from the crowded and disconnected character of the thoughts. It would be scarcely possible to find an obscure sentence. But unless the reader makes a strong effort to hold the attention, he may lose the connection. For Emerson, the practice Dr. Holmes recommends in some cases, of reading "in" rather than "through" a book, is certainly often best. He quotes largely from the thoughts of other writers, but he hardly ever quotes their words. Perhaps of all writers Montaigne is the one to whom he most often refers. He likes to use contrast or antithesis of thought; but does not care especially for the antithesis as a figure of speech. He uses metaphor and simile constantly; and quite as often for their suggestive force as for illustration. A quiet humor betrays itself often in the form of expression, which is the more enjoyable because unexpected. Take a single paragraph from "Nature" and look into the style with some care.

The problem of restoring to the world original and eternal beauty is solved by the redemption of the soul. The ruin, or the blank, that we see when we look at nature, is in our own eye. The axis of vision is not coincident with the axis of things, and so they appear not transparent but opaque. The reason why the world lacks unity, and lies broken and in heaps, is, because man is disunited with himself. He cannot be a naturalist, until he satisfies all the demands of the spirit. Love is as much its demand, as perception. Indeed, neither can be perfect without the other. In the uttermost meaning of the words, thought is devout, and devotion is thought. Deep calls unto deep. But in actual life, the marriage is not celebrated. There are innocent men who worship God after the tradition of their fathers, but their sense of duty has not yet extended to the use of all their faculties. And there are patient naturalists, but they freeze their subject under the wintry light of the understanding. Is not prayer also a study of truth,— a sally of the soul into the unfound infinite? No man ever prayed heartily, without learning something. But when a faithful thinker, resolute to detach every object from personal relations, and see it in the light of thought, shall, at the same time, kindle science with the fire of the holiest affections, then will God go forth anew into the creation.

Notice that the method is always statement rather than argument. If we do not feel the truth of his words, Emerson never stays to prove them; but goes on to state another truth. Notice the bold metaphors: "the axis of vision," "broken and in heaps," "they freeze their subject under the wintry light of the understanding." Notice the abrupt contrast of thought and style, and the quiet humor of the change in the two sentences, "Deep calls unto deep. But in actual

life, the marriage is not celebrated." Notice how the last sentence lifts the thought to the highest plane, and closes the paragraph with a grand trumpet-call of faith.

Always associated with the figure and fame of Emerson are those of Henry David Thoreau. He was an accomplished scholar, and in his earlier years wrote verse, some of which is of a high order. He was in love with nature. He liked very few human beings, but those few he loved very dearly. But he seemed to like all the gentler wild creatures; and they seem to have responded remarkably. It is said of him that he would take fish out of the lake in his hands, and put them back, the fish showing no fear and making no effort to escape. Whether this is literal fact or not, it is certainly true that he had far more sympathy with squirrels than with men and women in general. He built a hut on the shore of Walden Pond, near Concord, and lived there alone for nearly two years. But, as Lowell points out, Walden Pond was not very far from Concord; and the civilization Thoreau scorned was always conveniently near in case of need. His philosophy and faith were of the "Transcendental" school; but of a more combative and less attractive form than those of Emerson. His writings were voluminous. He contributed largely to a number of periodicals; and eleven volumes of his works have been published, nine of them since his death. They are for the most part, as the titles would indicate, descriptions of nature as he observed it. Some of them are: "Walden," 1854; "The Maine Woods," 1864; "Cape

Henry David
Thoreau,
born in
Massachu-
setts, 1817;
died, 1862.

Cod," 1865; "Early Spring in Massachusetts," 1881; followed by volumes named for the other seasons. These later volumes were published and the titles given by others, after Thoreau's death. He is not a scientific naturalist like Audubon; but he is a loving observer and a charming recorder of the phenomena of sky, field, and flood, and of the ways of flowers, trees, birds, and beasts. His writings gave a great stimulus to that sort of loving study and observation of nature, and set the example for a number of authors who, in more recent times, have written in a similar vein.

A few brief extracts from "Walden" will do more to suggest Thoreau's peculiar outlook upon life and the place he holds in our Literature than many words about him. He thus gives his reasons for going to live in the woods by Walden Pond :

I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die discover that I had not lived. I did not wish to live what was not life, living is so dear; nor did I wish to practise resignation, unless it was quite necessary. I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life, to live so sturdily and Spartan-like as to put to rout all that was not life, to cut a broad swath and shave close, to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world; or if it were sublime to know it by experience, and be able to give a true account of it in my next excursion.

And a little further on in the same chapter:

Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases, he may add his ten toes and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity, I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand ; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail.

The intimacy with which he lived among the wild creatures of the woods is illustrated by another passage. Some wild species of mouse quite different from the ordinary domestic pest frequented his cabin ; and seem to have been on terms of the greatest familiarity with Thoreau. He writes :

At length, as I leaned with my elbow on the bench one day, it ran up my clothes, and along my sleeve, and round and round the paper which held my dinner, while I kept the latter close, and dodged and played at bo-peep with it ; and when at last I held still a piece of cheese between my thumb and finger, it came and nibbled it, sitting in my hand, and afterward cleaned its face and paws like a fly, and walked away.

The young of the partridge he often held in his hands, and he thus writes in regard to them :

The remarkably adult, yet innocent expression of their open and serene eyes, is very memorable. All intelligence seems reflected in them. They suggest not merely the purity of infancy, but a wisdom clarified by experience. Such an eye was not born when the bird was, but is coeval with the sky it reflects. The woods do not yield another such a gem. The traveller does not often look into such a limpid well.

Amos Bronson Alcott,
born in Connecticut,
1799; died
in Massachusetts, 1888.

Amos Bronson Alcott is one of the most interesting personalities in the "Transcendental" group; although he has not left much of importance in the way of published writings. He was the master of a famous school in Boston, conducted on the theory that instruction should be by conversation, rather than by the learning and reciting of tasks. In discipline, he believed and practised the idea of "vicarious punishment," and more than once in his school the pathetic spectacle was seen of the teacher literally punishing himself in the presence of the offending scholar. Neither in his school teaching nor in any other occupation did Alcott secure the kind of success which ensures comfortable housekeeping; and it is difficult to see how his household would have lived but for the busy pen of his daughter, Louisa May. But he was a beautiful and inspiring presence in the community where he lived, and his influence was broadening and uplifting always. His more important published volumes are: "Tablets," 1868; "Concord Days," 1872; "Table Talk," 1877.

Margaret Fuller Ossoli,
born in Massachusetts,
1810; died,
1850.

Margaret Fuller bears to the woman authors of this country a relation somewhat similar to that which Emerson bears to all. Losing her father in her girlhood, her life was consecrated to a brave fight with fate. She kept the family together, and saw her younger brothers educated and well started in life. Meanwhile an eagerly active intellect was longing for companionship; and as with the growth of her brothers and their progress toward independence, the pressure of her cares relaxed, we find her in close



F. Stuart Boston

J. Margaret Fuller,

association with Alcott, Emerson, and Ripley. She was one of the editors of "The Dial." Afterwards she was associated with Greeley and Dana in the conduct of "The New York Tribune," in the greatest days of that famous newspaper. With the savings of her journalistic earnings, she went to Europe; and we find her there, a confidential friend of Mazzini. She was in Rome during the Revolution of 1848. She married Count Ossoli; and returning to America with him and their child, all were drowned in a hurricane off the south coast of Long Island. She was never identified with the Brook Farm experiment; but she visited the colony there, and it has always been suspected, though never proved, that some of the points in the character of "Zenobia," in "The Blithedale Romance," were taken by Hawthorne from his knowledge of Margaret Fuller. Her most important literary work was in journalism; and much of it has perished. Among the few published volumes are: "Woman in the Nineteenth Century," 1844; and "Papers in Literature and Art," 1848. Her views of woman's possibilities were "advanced" in their time. They have been for the most part realized in the present. The higher education, and the opportunities for intellectual companionship and influence for which she strenuously pleaded, are now freely open to all women who are capable of them, and will take advantage of them; and for this, thanks are due, among other influences, to the work of this brave and talented woman. It will be noticed that by her early death Margaret

Fuller's work is thrown within the limits of the previous period. But on account of her intimate association with the group of "Transcendentalists," her name is placed here.

**George
Ripley,
1802-1880.**

George Ripley was one of the original "Transcendentalists," and a leader in the Brook Farm experiment. He was during a long life one of our leading men of letters; but his work was largely journalistic and anonymous. He wrote extensively for "The New York Tribune," and was chief editor—with Charles A. Dana—of "The American Cyclopædia," both in its original and revised editions.

**Orestes
Augustus
Brownson,
1803-1876.**

Orestes Augustus Brownson has been referred to as a "Transcendentalist," with whom the reactionary tendency was so strong as to carry him into the Roman Catholic Church. His restless, eager, active mind led him to this goal from Presbyterianism, through Universalism, Unitarianism, and the "Transcendental" philosophy. He was an active politician of extreme Democratic views, and was at one time much interested in the socialistic schemes of Robert Owen. He was a philosopher of original and strong ways of thinking. During a large part of his life he maintained and edited a Quarterly Review, which at one time was reprinted and circulated in England. He published several novels and a large number of philosophical and controversial works, which have been collected and republished in nineteen volumes.

**Theodore
Parker,
1810-1860.**

Theodore Parker was a preacher, of radical views, who was closely associated with the "Transcendental"

movement. James Freeman Clarke was also associated with this group of thinkers, but wrote and preached more within the lines of the Unitarian denomination. He published a number of volumes on religious topics, of which those that had the widest popularity were probably "Ten Great Religions," 1871-1873, and "Every-day Religion," 1886.

James Free-
man Clarke,
1810-1888.

A writer on religious topics of a different type, but equally original and independent in his thinking, and of very wide influence, was Horace Bushnell. "Nature and the Supernatural," 1858, and "The Vicarious Sacrifice," 1865, have been the most strongly influential of his writings; appealing, however, mostly to those interested in theological questions, while "The Moral Uses of Dark Things" has a more general range of interest.

Horace
Bushnell,
1802-1876.

Elisha Mulford was a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church who, while living in retirement in his native town of Montrose, Pennsylvania, wrote and published, in 1870, "The Nation." This was a work on the fundamental principles of free government, which at once put him in the front rank of thinkers. In 1881 he issued "The Republic of God," which does for theology a work similar to that which "The Nation" did for higher politics. Both books are remarkable among works of their class for their high literary quality.

Elisha
Mulford,
1833-1885.

Among educators who in this period published works on philosophical subjects should be mentioned Mark Hopkins and James McCosh; and among

those who wrote on questions of government, Theodore Dwight Woolsey and Francis Lieber.

Several names of importance may be associated by their connection with journalism.

Horace Greeley wrote editorials which were models of terse, strong, Saxon English. James Thomas Fields, long the publisher of the "Atlantic Monthly," and through whom, as publisher, much of our best Literature has reached us, has written out his memories of the distinguished men with whom he has been associated in a volume called "Yesterdays with Authors," besides issuing two volumes of original verse. Josiah Gilbert Holland, who has already been mentioned as novelist and poet, while editor of "The Springfield Republican," published a series of volumes of essays, generally on topics of every-day manners and morals. They appeared at first under the pen name of "Timothy Titcomb." "Letters to Young People," "Gold Foil," "Letters to the Joneses," are the titles of some of these, which had a very wide circulation. While editor of "Scribner's Monthly," he issued two volumes of essays reprinted from that journal under the title of "Every-day Topics."

James
Thomas
Fields,
1816-1881.

Josiah
Gilbert
Holland.

George
William
Curtis, born
in Rhode
Island, 1824;
died in New
York, 1892.

The name of George William Curtis connects this group with that of the "Transcendentalists." In 1842, with an older brother, he joined the Brook Farm community, and continued with them for eighteen months. The next year and a half the brothers spent in farming and study at Concord, Massachusetts. In 1846 Curtis went abroad, and spent four

years in travel and study. On his return to this country, in 1850, he became one of the editors of "The New York Tribune." He was also associated with the management of the first series of "Putnam's Monthly." In 1853 he began in "Harper's Monthly" the publication of a series of papers which have been among the most powerful influences for general culture that our country has ever known. "The Editor's Easy Chair" was the part of the magazine to which many of its readers turned most eagerly, and from which they derived the greatest satisfaction. In a style of graceful humor and delicate satire, Curtis held up the mirror to many of our national weaknesses. With a broad critical appreciation he noted and described what was best and most promising in our Literature, art, and social life. With a genial earnestness he taught the lessons of sincerity and thoroughness in all forms of work, and held the public to the highest ideals of excellence. There can be no more convincing evidence of the essential soundness of the taste of the American people than the unchanging popularity of the "Easy Chair." Curtis was also editor-in-chief of "Harper's Weekly," from the time of its establishment until his death. This was the principal vehicle of his political writing, and it exercised a wide influence. Curtis acted generally with the Republican party, but he would accept no office, and at times did not hesitate to act independently. His most important political service was probably his advocacy of Civil Service Reform, in the advancement of which his efforts were of great efficacy.

His first publications were volumes of travel. "Nile Notes" appeared in 1851; the "Howadji in Syria" and "Lotus-Eating" in 1852. The "Potiphar Papers," 1853, is a satire upon New York society, with a slight thread of story running through it. "Prue and I," 1856, is a charming bit of description of New York life forty years ago, written in an exquisite style. "Trump's," 1861, was a novel of New York social life with a strong satire on the politics of that period. Curtis was also a favorite platform lecturer and a very effective orator. He published an address on "The Life, Character, and Writings of William Cullen Bryant" in 1879, an "Eulogy of Wendell Phillips" in 1884, and an "Address on James Russell Lowell" in 1892. Besides these, he edited "Motley's Correspondence" in 1889, and three volumes of his essays "From the Easy Chair" were published in 1891, 1893, and 1894; and a collection of his orations in 1893-1894.

An interesting group of writers, the permanence of whose reputation, however, seems doubtful, is that of the broad, grotesque humorists, who have been very widely read, and whom some have considered a peculiarly characteristic American product. The school, if it can be so called, began in the previous period with Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, whose "Georgia Scenes" is the forerunner of many similar works and is valuable also as a social study. Frederick Swartwout Cozzens caused a great deal of honest merriment with "The Sparrowgrass Papers." Charles Farrar Browne, under the pen name of "Artemus

Ward," was a famous humorist during the Sixties. The element of "surprise" is perhaps the strongest element in his wit. It is said that President Lincoln found great comfort in the writings of Browne, as well as in those of David Ross Locke, who during the same period kept people laughing over the sayings of "Petroleum V. Nasby." The "Nasby" papers differ from the other writings of this group in that they had a distinct political purpose and constitute a satire upon the political methods of the time.

One of the sure indications of comparative maturity in the intellectual life of a people is the development of language study and literary criticism. We consider now the group of writers who in these departments have given distinction to this period of American Literature.

George Perkins Marsh combined linguistic study with interest in public affairs. He was for many years, through frequent changes in administration, United States minister to Italy. His first publication was an "Icelandic Grammar," 1838. In 1859 appeared "Lectures on the English Language." This was followed, in 1862, by "The Origin and History of the English Language," and in 1864 he published the results of his studies in history and natural science in a work called "Man and Nature," which was revised and republished in 1874, under the title "The Earth as modified by Human Action."

George
Perkins
Marsh,
1801-1882.

William Dwight Whitney's career was more exclusively scholastic. From the year 1854 until his death, he was professor of Sanskrit, and from 1876, of

William
Dwight
Whitney,
1827-1895.

Comparative Philology, at Yale. He contributed to philological journals and occupied a very high position in linguistic scholarship. He superintended the preparation of the "Century Dictionary." His works of more general interest are some volumes of lectures, "Language and the Study of Language," and "Oriental and Linguistic Studies."

Richard
Grant White,
1821-1885.

Richard Grant White was a man of great versatility of talent. He was a careful and independent thinker on linguistic problems, publishing, on this subject, "Words and their Uses," 1870, and "Everyday English," 1880. He edited the works of Shakespeare, the edition appearing first in 1857, and being revised and republished in 1865. In 1863, during the Civil War, he published a little "brochure," called "The New Gospel of Peace," a satirical attack upon the "peace at any price" party, which was a very effective political pamphlet. Henry Norman Hudson was a Shakespearean scholar who has been of great service to students of Literature. His edition of Shakespeare has been widely used in schools and colleges, and his introductions to the plays are examples of luminous, suggestive, helpful criticism.

Henry Nor-
man Hudson,
1814-1886.

Henry Theodore Tuckerman was a favorite writer for newspapers and magazines. He was one of our earliest competent art critics. He published a number of volumes of sketches of travel, of literary and art criticism, and of verse.

Edwin Percy
Whipple,
born in
Massachusetts, 1819;
died, 1886.

The first American author to make literary criticism his chief work, and lift it to a place of first-rate importance, was Edwin Percy Whipple. His formal

education only reached the high school period; from which he went into mercantile business. But his literary education continued in his private reading and study. He became a frequent contributor to the best periodicals, and one of the most popular lecturers on the platform. An article on Macaulay, in 1843, attracted the attention of that famous writer, and brought its author prominently before the reading public. His critical writings have been gathered into volumes and published with the following titles: "Essays and Reviews," 1848; "Literature and Life," 1849; "Character and Characteristic Men," 1866; "Literature of the Age of Elizabeth," 1869; "Success and its Conditions," 1871; "Great Speeches and Orations of Webster," edited 1879. After his death appeared "Recollections of Eminent Men," 1886; "American Literature and Other Papers," 1887; and "Outlooks on Society, Literature, and Politics," 1888. Whipple's method is a contradiction of a current false impression of the critic as chiefly a faultfinder. He is generally appreciative; and sometimes seems to be too kindly in his judgments. Yet he is by no means undiscriminating. He sometimes very keenly expresses a fundamental failure; as when he wrote of Whitman's "Leaves of Grass," that "it had every leaf except the fig leaf." His papers were many of them prepared originally as popular lectures, and have a good deal of anecdote and other features which tend more to immediate interest than to permanent value. Yet they are all careful, discriminating studies of their

subjects, and some of them are among the very ablest of their class.

James
Russell
Lowell.

James Russell Lowell put his most intense effort into his work in poetry; and he says, somewhere, that in his poems, even more than in his personal letters, his real self is expressed. But it is a question, nevertheless, whether his strongest work does not appear in his Essays. "Conversations on Some of the Old Poets" appeared in 1845; "Fireside Travels," in 1864; "Among my Books," in two series, in 1870, 1876; "My Study Windows," 1871; "Democracy and Other Addresses," 1886; "Political Essays," 1888; "Latest Literary Essays and Addresses," 1891; and "The Old English Dramatists," 1892. It will be seen that his essays fall into three main classes: Essays of Travel; Political Essays and Addresses; and Literary Essays. The "Fireside Travels" is one of the most delightful books of the kind. It is written as a genial travelling companion, with a wide fund of information, would talk. In his political essays Lowell stood for the highest ideals of public life. "On a Certain Condescension in Foreigners" shows his strong Americanism of feeling and fervent patriotism, which, however, did not prevent his pointing out national faults so clearly that he was by many thoughtlessly accused of a lack of true patriotic feeling. The oration on "Democracy" was delivered in England, and is an eloquent, but discriminating, defence of American institutions. The essay on Abraham Lincoln was written before his death, and, like the passage quoted from the

"Commemoration Ode," is a remarkable instance of just contemporary judgment. But Lowell's most characteristic prose work is found in his literary essays. He was one of the first Americans to appreciate Chaucer. He has discussed the comparatively unknown Elizabethan dramatists with fulness of knowledge and keenness of judgment. His wealth of allusion is remarkable. His pages are crowded with quotations and references, many of them drawn from obscure sources and pointing to little known writers. Yet he does not seem burdened with the weight of his learning. One reads the allusions, references and quotations with the easy, though generally mistaken, feeling that it would be a slight matter to turn to these writers, and see for oneself what they say. Without any attempt at a formal, connected history of Literature, his works yet constitute a full body of comment on the course of English literary history. A careful reading of his essays with independent study of the works discussed would amount to a pretty thorough course of study in that subject. As an example of Lowell's work in this kind, and of critical writing in general, study a paragraph from his essay on Thoreau, in the volume called "My Study Windows."

Solitary communion with nature does not seem to have been sanitary or sweetening in its influence on Thoreau's character. On the contrary, his letters show him more cynical as he grew older. While he studied with respectful attention the minks and woodchucks, his neighbors, he looked with utter contempt on the august drama of

destiny of which his country was the scene, and on which the curtain had already risen. He was converting us back to a state of nature "so eloquently," as Voltaire said of Rousseau, "that he almost persuaded us to go on all fours," while the wiser fates were making it possible for us to walk erect for the first time. Had he conversed more with his fellows, his sympathies would have widened with the assurance that his peculiar genius had more appreciation, and 15 his writings a larger circle of readers, or at least a warmer one, than he dreamed of. We have the highest testimony¹ to the natural sweetness, sincerity, and nobleness of his temper, and in his books an equally irrefragable one to the rare quality of his mind. He was not a strong 20 thinker, but a sensitive feeler. Yet his mind strikes us as cold and wintry in its purity. A light snow has fallen everywhere in which he seems to come on the track of the shier sensations that would elsewhere leave no trace. We think greater compression would have done more for his 25 fame. A feeling of sameness comes over us as we read so much. Trifles are recorded with an over-minute punctuality and conscientiousness of detail. He records the state of his personal thermometer thirteen times a day. We cannot help thinking sometimes of the man who

30 "Watches, starves, freezes, and sweats
 To learn but catechisms and alphabets
 Of unconcerning things, matters of fact,"

and sometimes of the saying of the Persian poet, that "when the owl would boast, he boasts of catching mice 35 at the edge of a hole." We could readily part with some of his affectations. It was well enough for Pythagoras to say, once for all, "When I was Euphorbus at the siege of Troy"; not so well for Thoreau to travesty it into "When I was a shepherd on the plains of Assyria."

¹ Emerson.

40 A naïve thing said over again is anything but naïve. But with every exception, there is no writing comparable with Thoreau's in kind, that is comparable with it in degree where it is best; where it disengages itself, that is, from the tangled roots and dead leaves of a second-hand Orient-
45 alism, and runs limpid and smooth and broadening as it runs, a mirror for whatever is grand and lovely in both worlds.¹

Lowell's characteristic fulness of allusion is well illustrated by the fact that in this short paragraph there are references to French, Persian, and Greek writers, besides an English quotation which is far from familiar. The most serious defect in Thoreau's work is expressed in a powerful sentence at lines 4-8. One needs to appreciate the condition of the country in the Sixties, and the intense feeling of those who, like Lowell, were earnest patriots and enthusiastic anti-slavery men, to feel the force of this and the following sentence. But any one may appreciate the keen, forcible discrimination of the short antithetic sentence at lines 19-20. The metaphor in lines 21-24 is very forcible to one who knows anything about rabbit shooting. These passages illustrate a striking quality of Lowell's prose work in the mingling of scholarly allusion and quotation, homely commonplace references, and powerful, solemn appeals to the deepest feelings, without arousing a feeling of incongruity. As criticism, this paragraph happens to be for the most part depreciatory; but the high appreciation of the excellence of Thoreau's work is implied

¹ Copyright, 1871, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Boston.

throughout, and is eloquently stated at the close. The point to be noted is that there is no general praise and no general blame; but each is specific and helps us to a real comprehension of the characteristic qualities of the author criticised.

Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The first issue of the "Atlantic Monthly," in November, 1857, contained an article called "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." Its opening words, "I was just going to say, when I was interrupted," suggest the method of this and of the papers which followed under the same name. It was not the fashion then to print the names of the authors of magazine articles. But the sparkling wit and humor of these papers, and the bright and often beautiful bits of verse which appeared occasionally in them, revealed the author to discerning minds; and readers began soon to watch eagerly for the appearance of this, perhaps the most characteristic work of Oliver Wendell Holmes. "The Autocrat" is a book by itself. There is nothing else in exactly the same vein. There is keen character drawing in it. The reader easily forms a mental picture of the boarding-house company. The "Landlady's Daughter," "The Young Man of the Name of John," and "The Old Gentleman" are particularly well drawn pictures. There is a tender little love story running through it; very unobtrusive, scarcely appearing at first, but giving a sweet human interest to the whole. And the talk of the "Autocrat" is like the talk of Dr. Holmes as it has been described by those who knew him,—a constantly bubbling fountain. He

avoids politics and subjects of current interest; but his theories of life and conduct have free play. His warm sympathy, keen sarcasm, and speculative tendencies come out in a whimsical, tentative fashion, which is extremely interesting. His conservative, aristocratic tastes are frankly acknowledged in his asserted preference for "the man with the family portraits" over "the man with the daguerrotypes"; though he admits that the first may be himself a worthless creature, in which case he would prefer the second. But one cares little for the peculiar opinions of the papers, in the delight one feels in the way they are expressed. Two volumes succeeded "The Autocrat," called, respectively, "The Professor at the Breakfast Table," and "The Poet at the Breakfast Table." They have many of the same characteristics, "The Professor" being a little more controversial in its tone on religious questions, and "The Poet" containing a larger proportion of verse. They hardly maintain the high level of bright humor that distinguished "The Autocrat." These three volumes appeared in 1858, 1860, and 1862. Other volumes of essays were "Currents and Counter-currents," 1861; "Soundings from the Atlantic," 1863; and "Mechanism and Morals," 1871. These, with other volumes, discuss a variety of topics, scientific, semi-scientific, social, literary, and moral, always with keen judgment and abundant wit. Just before his death, in 1890, the old charm of "The Autocrat" appeared afresh in the papers called "Over the Teacups."

Donald
Grant
Mitchell,
born in
Connecticut,
1822.

Although he began his literary work in the early years of the century,—“Fresh Gleanings” was published in 1847,—Donald Grant Mitchell is still living and writing. In 1850 and 1851, under the name of “Ik Marvel,” appeared the books which gave him fame; and which remain among the best-loved writings of our Literature. “The Reveries of a Bachelor” and “Dream Life” speak tender thoughts and true, helpful reflections in pure, musical, poetic prose. He has published also one novel, “Dr. Johns,” and a number of volumes of essays, for the most part on topics connected with rural life.

Charles
Dudley
Warner,
born in
Massa-
chusetts,
1829.

One of the most delightful of our humorous writers is Charles Dudley Warner. He has discussed life and letters, morals and manners, with a charming mingling of the serious and the comic, in the columns of “The Hartford Courant,” in “Harper’s Magazine,” and in a series of volumes which have been widely read. “Back Log Studies,” “My Summer in a Garden,” and “As We Were Saying” are the titles of some of his better-known books.

QUESTIONS

What has been the special power of Emerson’s “Essays”? What relation does “Nature” bear to his later prose writings? What does Lowell say of “The American Scholar”? What is a notable quality of Emerson’s thinking? What were his later volumes? With what English authors may he be compared? What are some of the peculiarities of his style? Point out some of the points of style in the extract from “Nature.” Give some account of Thoreau’s character and work. In the extracts given, what peculiar qualities are displayed? What were the

chief events in the life of Margaret Fuller? What is the special importance and interest of her career? What other writers are associated with the group of "Transcendentalists"? What other important writers on religious and educational topics? What writers are associated as journalists? The name of what writer connects these two groups? With what magazines was Curtis connected? What was the influence exerted by the "Easy Chair"? What were his other publications? What distinguished writers on linguistic topics? Who are some of the writers of criticism of this period? Give an estimate of the value of the critical work of Edwin P. Whipple. What are the chief prose works of James Russell Lowell? What are some of the notable qualities of his prose style? How are these qualities illustrated in the selection from his essays? What was the "Breakfast Table" series of Oliver Wendell Holmes? What are some of the characteristics of his prose work?

CHAPTER XIII

PERIOD OF THE LATER NINETEENTH CENTURY, 1850-1880

ORATORY

THE oratory of this period, as it has left its impression upon our Literature, shows a marked difference from that of the preceding epoch. The great orators are not in the houses of Congress. The debates there no longer hold the attention of the people as they did in the days of Calhoun, Clay, and Webster. This may be due to the degree of success which attended the efforts of the compromisers. Politicians were afraid of the slavery issue. Consequently discussion on that burning question was freer and more frequently heard from the pulpit and the platform than from the halls of the national legislature. As this was the question which more than all others interested the people, the greatest argumentative and persuasive ability was developed where its discussion was freest.

Henry Ward Beecher,
born in Connecticut,
1813; died in New York,
1887.

In the early part of the period, the most famous name in pulpit and platform oratory is that of Henry Ward Beecher, the brother of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. He was trained under the same influences as those which moulded her mind and character. Edu-

cated at Amherst College and Lane Theological Seminary, his active life began in Indiana; first at Lawrenceburg, and afterwards at Indianapolis. But for the most of his life, he was the pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn; and it is safe to say that for many years he was the most famous preacher in America. He was also a popular lecturer during this period, and wrote extensively for the press; being editorially connected with the "Independent," and afterwards founding the "Christian Union," which in later years became "The Outlook." Beecher's sermons were stenographically reported, and printed in these and other papers, and thus very widely circulated. Both on the platform and in the pulpit he spoke constantly and eloquently against slavery; and is counted with Wendell Phillips and William Lloyd Garrison among the most powerful agents in the antislavery agitation. His oratory is distinguished by the qualities of fervid eloquence, great abundance and variety of illustration, startling independence of statement, and brilliant humor. He was an original thinker, and many of his sermons are models of persuasive argument, combining close logical thought with beautiful imagery. One of the greatest achievements in the history of oratory was the series of addresses he delivered in England during the Civil War. The popular mind in England had been turned toward the cause of the South, largely by the fact that the war hindered the importation of cotton, and thus interfered seriously with their manufacturing industries. Beecher set himself, with remark-

able success, to overcome this prejudice. In more than one instance he faced a bitterly hostile audience, and, before his address was finished, had overcome this hostility and carried his hearers enthusiastically to the acceptance of his conclusions.

His publications number twenty titles. Some of the more important are: "Lectures to Young Men," 1844; "Star Papers," 1858, 1859; "Sermons," 1858, 1868; "American Rebellion," speeches in England, 1864; "Sermons," eleven volumes, 1869-1875; "Life of Jesus the Christ," Vol. I, 1871, Vol. II, 1891; "Yale Lectures on Preaching," 1872-1874.

Phillips
Brooks,
born in Mas-
sachusetts,
1835; died,
1894.

In the later years of this period, a position of even more universal influence was occupied by Phillips Brooks. He was not a finished orator as was Beecher, his utterance being too rapid for the best effect; but there was a power of intense earnestness in his delivery which gave him an irresistible hold upon his audiences. His active career fell after the anti-slavery agitation and the war; and he never used the pulpit for the discussion of political or economic questions. He was never a controversialist in any direction. His sermons were appeals to the spiritual nature, using the motives of the Christian religion. His career was one of continued, unbroken, popular success. Graduating at Harvard College, he pursued his professional studies at the Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia. For ten years he preached in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and in 1869 became rector of Trinity Church, Boston. In 1891 he was elected Bishop of Massachusetts.

Bishop Brooks' sermons bear the test of printing far better than most popular orations. His style is pure and elegant. His method is not that of argument, but rather the statement of spiritual truth, with abundant illustration from nature and from literature. There is never any humor; scarcely ever any anecdote. The effect is the result of clear, strong thinking and the presentation of the thought in a great variety of aspects. It is impossible to classify him theologically. He states truth in terms of life rather than of dogma, and never seems interested in the dogmatical inferences that might be drawn from what he says. He was, as a preacher, particularly attractive to men, and especially to young men. He published "Yale Lectures on Preaching," 1877; "Sermons," 1878; "The Influence of Jesus," a course of lectures delivered in Philadelphia, on the Bohlen Foundation, 1874; "The Candle of the Lord," a volume of sermons, 1881; "Twenty Sermons," 1886; and "The Light of the World," sermons, 1890.

A paragraph from "The Influence of Jesus" is given as an example of the pulpit oratory of this period.

And yet once more, the morality of Jesus involves the only true secret of courage and of the freedom that comes of courage. More and more we come to see that courage is a positive thing. It is not simply the absence of fear. To be brave is not merely not to be afraid. Courage is that compactness and clear coherence of all a man's faculties and powers which makes his manhood a single operative unit in the world. That is the reason why narrowness of thought

and life often brings a kind of courage, and why, as men's range of thought enlarges and their relations with their fellow-men increase, there often comes a strange timidity. The bigot is often very brave. He is held fast into a unit, and possesses himself completely in his own selfishness. For such a bravery as that the man and the world both pay very dear. But when the grasp that holds a man and his powers is not his self-consciousness but his obedience to his Father, when loyalty to Him surrounds and aggregates the man's capacities, so that, held in His hand, the man feels his distinctiveness, his distinctive duty, his distinctive privilege, then you have reached the truth of which the bigot's courage was the imitation. Then you have secured courage, not by the limitation, but by the enlargement of the life. Then the dependence upon God makes the independence of man in which are liberty and courage. The man's own personality is found only in the household of his Father, and only in the finding of his personality does he come to absolute freedom and perfect fearlessness.

So brief an extract can, of course, give only a very imperfect, fragmentary notion of the orator's style. Yet it will serve to illustrate some of the qualities we have pointed out. There is no argument. The passage is in the nature of an extended definition of courage, and the definition is commended to us by its repeated statement in varied form. There is not any really figurative language here; and there is not much in Bishop Brooks' sermons, as compared with many others. The higher conception of courage is developed by contrast with the more common courage of the narrow-minded bigot. And one who has followed the lecture from the beginning can scarcely

fail to make the desired inference that the life of Jesus is the example of this courage.

Robert Charles Winthrop was an active statesman in the earlier years of this period, and, in the later decades, a favorite orator for ceremonial occasions. He was a finished orator of the old school, and a man of broad and thorough scholarship in history and public affairs.

Robert
Charles
Winthrop,
1809-1894.

Wendell Phillips was probably the most effective platform orator in the antislavery agitation. William Lloyd Garrison furnished the facts and figures and logic. Phillips knew how to set them on fire, and burn them into the consciousness of his hearers. Barrett Wendell tells an incident of Phillips' career, to the effect that in a Phi Beta Kappa address at Harvard College, he made his dignified, conservative audience applaud the assassination of the Emperor of Russia, before they knew what they were doing. It was a triumph of effective oratory, and was characteristic of Phillips. He was probably the greatest master of invective among American orators. His power was largely in intensity of statement and condensed force of delivery. His orations do not bear the test of print so well as do those of George William Curtis, who has already been spoken of at length, but whose name ought to be mentioned here as one of the most accomplished, elegant, and effective orators of the time.

Wendell
Phillips,
1811-1884.

The nearest to an exception to our remarks about the legislative oratory of this period is Charles Sumner; who stood in the Senate as the great

Charles
Sumner,
1811-1874.

champion of emancipation. His addresses are learned, logical, elegant, impressive. They do not, however, have the spontaneity, the flash and fire, of the true orator. Probably the most effective speech he ever made was an oration before a popular audience, on "The True Grandeur of Nations."

Among the ablest of those who maintained the Southern side in the great sectional debate of this period was Alexander Hamilton Stephens of Georgia. Left an orphan at an early age, he was assisted to an education by kind friends, but paid every penny of the pecuniary indebtedness thus incurred with his earliest surplus earnings. He was recognized as one of the ablest lawyers in the country; and from the year 1843 until 1859, and again from 1874 till 1882, he represented Georgia in the United States Congress. He was a Whig in politics, according to the old divisions of party, and strongly opposed disunion. But when the act of secession was passed by his state, his principle of State Sovereignty led him to acquiesce in the action, and he accepted the office of Vice-President of the Confederate States. In a famous address delivered at this time, he stated with a frankness and force unexampled in any of the speeches of the period, that the fundamental principle on which the proposed new government was based was the inequality of races, justifying the institution of slavery. He accepted the results of the war loyally, and did able and patriotic work in his last terms of service in Congress. He published

Alexander
Hamilton
Stephens,
born in
Georgia,
1812;
died, 1883.

one of the ablest contemporary accounts of the contest of 1861-1865, entitled "The War between the States."

A consistent advocate of the doctrine of State Sovereignty, and a leader in the movements which resulted in the Civil War, was Jefferson Davis of Mississippi, the President of the Confederate States. He had been a brave officer in the Mexican War; was a member of the cabinet of President Pierce; and for a number of years represented his state in the United States Senate. A paragraph from his last address in that body, bidding it farewell when his state had adopted the Ordinance of Secession, is, perhaps, as good an example as can be found of the oratory of that side of the question; and states clearly and forcibly the principle on which the leaders of secession justified their course. The speech from which this is taken is preserved by Davis himself in his book "The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government."¹

Jefferson
Davis,
born in
Kentucky,
1808;
died in
Louisiana,
1889.

It is known to Senators who have served with me here that I have for many years advocated, as an essential attribute of State sovereignty, the right of a State to secede from the Union. Therefore, if I had not believed there was a justifiable cause, if I had thought that Mississippi was acting without sufficient provocation, or without an existing necessity, I should still, under my theory of the government, because of my allegiance to the State of which I am a citizen, have been bound by her action. I, however, may be permitted to say that I do think she has justifiable cause, and I

¹ Published by D. Appleton & Co.

approve of her act. I conferred with her people before that act was taken, counselled them then that, if the state of things which they apprehended should exist when their Convention met, they should take the action which they have now adopted.

* * * * *

Then, Senators, we recur to the principles upon which our Government was founded ; and when you deny them, and when you deny to us the right to withdraw from a Government which, thus perverted, threatens to be destructive of our rights, we but tread in the path of our fathers when we proclaim our independence and take the hazard. This is done, not in hostility to others, not to injure any section of the country, not even for our own pecuniary benefit, but from the high and solemn motive of defending and protecting the rights we inherited, and which it is our duty to transmit unshorn to our children.

The best examples of oratory during this period have been left to us by the great war president Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln's life belongs to the political rather than to the literary history of the country, but we may properly indicate some of the landmarks of his career as an orator. He was entirely self-educated, having only the very slightest advantages of the most primitive common schools. He made his way to the bar of the state of Illinois, and became one of the leading lawyers in a time of great forensic ability. Lawyers' addresses at that time, in that community, were not reported ; and we have only traditional accounts of the ability he displayed in that form of oratory. He had, we are told, a remarkable power of getting rid of the irrelevant circumstances

Abraham
Lincoln,
born in
Kentucky,
1809 ;
died at
Washington,
D.C., 1865.

and piercing quickly to the vital issue in his cases. He early entered politics; was repeatedly in the Legislature, and served a term in the United States House of Representatives. As the question of slavery forced itself to the front, Lincoln recognized its importance, and in a famous utterance stated what many believed but few dared to say, the absolute necessity that the question should be met and decided. "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free." This seems a commonplace now. But then the vast majority of the people were determined that it must so remain. Lincoln took the position that the general government had the right and therefore was under obligation to keep slavery out of the territories. This was the party platform on which Lincoln conducted the famous debate with Stephen A. Douglas. They were candidates for the United States Senate, and the direct object of the canvass was the election of members of the Legislature who should choose the senator. The result showed that the majority of the people of the state favored Lincoln, but the arrangement of the legislative districts was such that the majority of the Legislature chose Douglas. The debate, however, brought Lincoln before the country and made him one of the two or three most prominent candidates for the nomination to the Presidency. The speeches of Lincoln in this debate are among our noblest examples of argumentative oratory. The logic is strong, the language clear, always putting the thought in effective form. Lowell

notes the fact that Lincoln's oratory always appeals to the highest qualities in his hearers. This is one secret of its enduring influence. He keeps close to the present immediate bearings of the matter under discussion; but he keeps always in mind their relation to the unchanging principles of right reason. So his addresses are always interesting. Shortly before the nominations for the Presidency were made, in February, 1860, he delivered an address at the Cooper Institute, New York, which deepened the impression which had been made by his debate with Douglas. It was for the most part a luminous, candid argument for the right of the general government to control the question of slavery in the territories, closing with an eloquent passage which lifted the discussion to the realm of morals, ending with the famous sentence: "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it." Then came the election, the secession of the Southern States, and the inauguration. I remember as a lad hearing the first inaugural address, and as the calm, pleading words fell on my ear, wondering if there could be any so unreasonable as to refuse to be influenced. Then followed the terrible years of the Civil War. The next great instance of his power as an orator was in the midst of the struggle, at the dedication as a national cemetery of the battle-field of Gettysburg, on November 19, 1863. Edward Everett delivered the formal oration in his usual eloquent manner; but that oration few people remember.

The President had been invited to be present, and had prepared an address of twenty lines of print. In the course of it he said, "The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here." The words have proved true as to all but the twenty lines of Lincoln's address. The world has clearly noted and will never forget what he said there. It is one of the immortal words. There were important speeches after this, at different times. But I will mention only the one spoken on the last great occasion when Lincoln stood before the whole American people. The war was practically over. The hostile armies had not yet surrendered, but the end was clearly in sight. Lincoln intended no change in the general policy of his administration, and there was, therefore, no occasion for an extended inaugural address. But it was an opportunity to say the word which should guide the feelings of a great people in the moment of victory. The address did this work. Its closing paragraph ought to be in the memory of every American. The Gettysburg address is given for more particular study.

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper

that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

It is exceedingly difficult to analyze this famous address. The effect it produces is that of a living utterance upon living spirits, and in so far it has the elusive charm of life. One can hardly fail to see its appropriateness to the occasion and to feel the dignity of its rhythmic sentences. Observe how the orator joins the thought of the special occasion to the great enduring principles which he believed to be at stake in the contest. Notice the reserve with which the temptation to expand is resisted. A great part of the power is in the wonderful condensation. At the same time one cannot fail to notice the progress of thought from the opening sentence to the immortal phrase with which it ends. A single great thought simply but appropriately spoken is the secret of this, perhaps the greatest oration in American history.

QUESTIONS

What was the cause of the marked difference between the oratory of this period and that of the preceding? Who was the most famous pulpit orator of the time? Give some account of his career. What were the striking characteristics of his oratory? What remarkable series of orations did he deliver? In what respects did the pulpit oratory of Phillips Brooks differ from that of Beecher? Give an outline of his career. What was his method of address? Analyze briefly the selection from "The Influence of Jesus." What type of oratory is represented by Robert C. Winthrop? Describe the style of Wendell Phillips. Describe the oratory of Charles Sumner. What two distinguished men represent the oratory of the Southern States in this period? Give some account of the life and public career of Alexander H. Stephens. In the selection from Jefferson Davis, what are the leading thoughts presented? Give some account of the early career of Abraham Lincoln. What famous utterance in one of his earlier political speeches? What striking qualities were displayed in the debate with Douglas? Describe the Cooper Institute address. What was the occasion of the Gettysburg address? Describe the second inaugural address. Analyze briefly the Gettysburg address.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST TWENTY YEARS

IN the effort to give a general view of the present condition of Literature in America, a cause of embarrassment is the amount of material. The wide diffusion of intelligence has tended to stimulate Literature by affording a very large reading public; and the multiplication of newspapers and magazines has worked in the same direction by furnishing an easy mode of access to this public. Moreover, the general habit of reading and the study of good Literature which has been fostered by the popular reading circles and clubs, has developed a certain amount of technical ability with the pen; so that the number of those who can turn out a copy of reasonably correct verse, or a readable story or essay, is now very large. The university movement has led to the production of a vast number of treatises and theses; and every ambitious teacher, nowadays, thinks it due to his own reputation and to that of his institution that he print something. Some popular authors have made large sums of money by their writings; and one result of this is the mistaken impression that "Literature" is a sure and easy road to wealth. These facts and tendencies, with others which have worked in the same direction, have resulted in an enormous amount

of book production; so that even to name all the writers of the last twenty years would require another volume at least as large as this; and the volume would not be so useful as an ordinary trade catalogue. If all those and only those could be named who really deserve a place in American Literature, a valuable result would be secured; but it is not at all probable that this could be successfully attempted. It may be possible, however, and if possible, it will be useful, to point out some of the qualities and tendencies of our present Literature; mentioning only a very few representative names under each class. In doing this, no disparagement is intended toward those whose names may be omitted. Completeness being out of the question, it is only hoped that the survey may be, in some degree, representative.

The most of the verse-writing at present is Lyric, and of the lighter, less serious type. There is a great deal of technical excellence and delicacy of form with a tendency to the cultivation of the more artificial types, such as the Sonnet and the French forms. The influence of the realistic movement, so strong in all nineteenth-century Literature, is seen in the number of dialect poems, illustrating the character and habits of different sections of the country. One of Riley's titles, "Poems Here at Home," and one of Field's, "A Little Book of Western Verse," illustrate the local character, which is one of the accompaniments of this realistic tendency. The average quality of the verse now published far exceeds that of earlier periods, but there is none which appeals to the uni-

Verse.

General
Characteris-
tics.

versal heart as did that of Longfellow and Whittier. There is an interesting group of writers in Canada who have recently attracted attention by work of excellent quality, both in verse and in prose fiction. Brander Matthews, in his recent "Introduction to American Literature," expresses the opinion that we have a right to expect a distinctively Canadian Literature as well as an Australian. There may be reasonable doubt whether the differences between Canada and the United States are sufficient to cause a distinct type of Literature, but it is of great interest to mark the appearance of this group of writers as one of the signs of developing national life in our northern neighbor.

Dialect
Verse.

Francis Bret
Harte, born,
1839.

John Hay.

It was in 1870 that a little bit of dialect verse called "The Heathen Chinee" caught the eye of the American public. It was such a perfect satire upon the Anti-Chinese agitation of that period, and in all respects so perfect a thing of its kind, that it proved the advent of a new force in our Literature. Francis Bret Harte has, of late years, given himself to story-writing, to the loss of the amount and quality of the verse he might have given us. His best work has represented the life of the mining camps in California and the Rocky Mountain region; often in dialect. He has written strong, dramatic, spirited stories both in prose and verse, and has a rich fund of humor and pathos. Of late years he has resided in England, and his later writings are better known there than in America. John Hay's "Pike County Ballads" shows similar characteristics; and Eugene

Field, whose recent death brought to a premature close a most promising career, employed the same method in many of his "verses," as he always modestly termed them. But Field was not limited to this vein. Probably his reputation is more firmly based upon his poems of childhood. He entered, as few writers have been able to do, into the child spirit; and in "Little Boy Blue," and other similar poems, has very tenderly expressed the sorrow of bereavement. A very different writer, and yet one whom we instinctively associate with Field on account of his similar power in dealing with the thoughts and feelings of the child, is James Whitcomb Riley. His verse is much of it in the dialect of the Indiana farmer; and is quite unique in our Literature. He is not confined to this, however; but has written some beautiful verse in literary English.

Eugene
Field,
1850-1896.

The strong lyrical tendency of our present poets is illustrated by Edith Matilda Thomas, in delicate studies of nature, full of the sweetness and spice of the woods; by Emily Dickinson, in very quaint, original, and suggestive utterances of a rare spirit; and by Richard Watson Gilder, in verse which sometimes speaks with a force unusual in recent poetry.

Nature
Verse.

Henry Cuyler Bunner best illustrates the tendency to the use of the French forms, and the bright, delicate, little poems which no term so well describes as the French phrase, "Vers de Société." We have quoted, in the Introduction, his pretty triolet "The Pitcher of Mignonette."

French
Forms.

Henry Cuyler
Bunner,
1855-1896.

Canadian
Poets.

Bliss
Carman.

Prose
Fiction.

Realism.

The Short
Story.

Romance.

Bliss Carman began his career in Canada. He can no longer be distinctively identified with that group of writers noticed above, but his verse is so fresh and strong as to demand special notice.

The realistic movement has been strongly influential, also, in recent fiction, and perhaps on account of the wide extent of our country and the marked social differences between the different sections, this realism has frequently busied itself in the close and detailed study of local types of character and manners. As a natural result, dialect is very prominent in most of the recent novels and short stories.

In careful study of character and manners, in natural, unaffected, modern quality of style, in bright, piquant dialogue, in the skilful use of ordinary, commonplace incident for artistic effect, and in purity of aim and tone, our best modern fiction excels. Like the verse, its lack is intensity of interest, that masterful grasp upon the feelings, and that depth of reflection contained in Hawthorne's greater works. Due partly to the special demand created by the multiplication of magazines, partly to the general tendency to brevity characteristic of the time, is the fact that so many of our recent writers of fiction give so large a share of their attention to The Short Story. In this, American Literature has, during recent years, attained a high degree of perfection. The Romance has not been altogether unrepresented, and we have a few writers who have joined in the recent reaction in that direction.

The first names to be mentioned among our writers

of fiction, however, are free from the local tendency. At the head of the list naturally comes to all minds the name of William Dean Howells. He made his first appearance before the public in a little volume of verse called "Poems of Two Friends," published in connection with John James Piatt. He wrote a "Life of Lincoln" during the presidential campaign of 1860. He spent some years in Italy, part of the time as American consul at Venice, and as a result of this issued "Venetian Life" in 1866, and "Italian Journeys" in 1867. His "Suburban Sketches," 1871, revealed him as a delicate humorist, and "Their Wedding Journey" in the same year made him one of the most popular writers of the day. Twenty-seven volumes appeared in the next twenty-three years. He was for some years editor of the "Atlantic Monthly," and later issued a series of critical articles in "The Editor's Study" of "Harper's Magazine." Among the most popular of his novels since "Their Wedding Journey" are "A Modern Instance," 1882, and "The Rise of Silas Lapham," 1885. Howells has clear and strongly held theories as to fiction, which he has fully expounded in the volumes "Criticism and Fiction" and "My Literary Passions." He is a realist, and therefore writes novels rather than romances. He thinks the deepest interest and the most useful lessons alike are found in the portrayal of ordinary every-day life and the sort of people we constantly meet. His writings are entirely pure and elevating in their tendency. He never deals with crime or vice as if they were

William
Dean
Howells,
born 1837.

the main source of interest in life. There is a vein of irony running through his work. He does not usually seem to take his characters very seriously. The average woman of his stories especially is a somewhat weak, inconsequent sort of person. The conversation of his characters is very bright and natural, if not rather too constantly in the vein of word-play and "chaff." In some of his later books he has shown a tendency to use fiction for the purpose of expressing the results of his study of social problems.

Closely associated in most minds with Howells is Henry James, although the points of difference are at least as many and important as the points of resemblance. He is one of the most prolific, and at the same time one of the most finished and artistic, of modern writers. In the years from 1875 to 1893 he issued thirty-three different publications, an average of nearly two each year. But there is not the least sign of haste in his work; his style is finished to the finest point. He says the brightest things in the most inimitable way. His scenes and characters are studied to their last details, and are like cameo work in their fine delineations. His conversation is perfect in its kind. Perhaps his strongest work is in such short stories as "Daisy Miller," "Tales of Three Cities," "The Wheel of Time." But his work is all strong. It lacks the interest of incident and strong passion. It seems not likely ever to be widely popular, but for minute study of character and of style, he will always be intensely attractive to the literary student.

Henry
James, born
1843.

One of the most widely popular of recent American novelists is Francis Marion Crawford. His father was a distinguished sculptor, and thus it happened that Crawford's birth and a considerable part of his life were in Italy. This has given character to much of his work. His stories are mostly romantic novels. "Mr. Isaacs," which gave him his first popularity, is almost a pure romance, depending largely for its interest on the element of the occult. Many critics think that his strongest work has been done in those stories which deal with the life of modern Italy, and which, therefore, have more of the character of realism. Of these "A Roman Singer" and the "Saracinesca" series have been widely read. Crawford also has his theory of what a novel ought to be, and has expounded it in a little volume which he published in 1893. It is, in substance, that the novel is a drama that can be carried about with one and enjoyed in private, the descriptive and purely narrative parts having their function in doing for the reader what is done for the spectator of a play by the costumes and scenery.

Prominent among the writers who illustrate the tendency to close study of local characteristics is Francis Bret Harte. His "Luck of Roaring Camp" was as fresh a note in fiction as his "Heathen Chinee" in verse, and was a more artistic one. It had a firm directness of narrative style, a strong, clear conception and presentation of character, and a singular combination of a grim sort of humor with heart-breaking pathos. The gambling, murdering, self-

Francis
Marion
Crawford,
born 1854

Dialect Fiction,
and Local
Studies.

Francis Bret
Harte.

sacrificing hero he introduced to fiction was not altogether credible, but he was certainly interesting. Harte has had any number of imitators in this type of character study.

George Washington Cable, born 1844.

George Washington Cable has taken the Creole of Louisiana as the material for his work in fiction. His first book to attract attention was a volume of studies of Louisiana life called "Old Creole Days." This was followed by a series of novels dealing in general with the same phase of life and character. "The Grandissimes," "Dr. Sevier," "Bonaventure," and "John March, Southerner," are the titles of his principal works. Cable's characters are strongly conceived and distinctly individualized. They reveal themselves in their words and actions. There is a charming element of romance, but it is the romance of real life, of consistent character, and of credible experiences. A special charm is added by the comparatively unfamiliar Creole and Acadian atmosphere. The dialect is peculiar, and in some instances there is so much of it as to hinder the easy enjoyment of the book. There is a delicate vein of humor. "Narcisse," in "Dr. Sevier," is one of the most deliciously humorous characters that Literature has given us since Dickens dropped his pen.

Mary Noailles Murfree.

Mary Noailles Murfree, better known under her pen name of "Charles Egbert Craddock," has taken for her special field the life of the people of the central mountain region of Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia. It was a new and unexplored field. Miss Murfree knew it well; and the original, racy

traits of the people afforded great possibilities of character study. The mountain country and the lawless life of the "moonshiners," or illicit distillers, added a legitimate element of romance. Miss Murfree has unusual descriptive power, and she tells a story well. There is, perhaps, a failure of imaginative force in her portrayal of character. The people in her different books are to a great extent repetitions. The dialect is a very conspicuous feature, and becomes sometimes a little wearisome. "Where the Battle was Fought," "The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains," and "In the Stranger People's Country," are characteristic examples of her work.

Very strong work of a similar kind is being done for rural New England by Mary Eleanor Wilkins. She began with little sketches of life and character in the remote New England town, generally selecting forlorn old maids or widows as the central figures of her scenes. These she treated with delicacy and fine force of art; it being a matter of wonder how much interest she would arouse in such apparently unpromising material. There were two volumes of these sketches, published under the titles "A New England Nun" and "A Humble Romance," before she published any extended novels. Of these there are now four before the public, characterized by similar qualities to those of the sketches. In "Madelon," she introduced strongly romantic elements of plot and character; but in the others she is strongly realistic, with a preference for the gray tones of life.

Mary
Eleanor
Wilkins.

Indeed, this prevailingly gloomy atmosphere seems to present a rather one-sided view of the life and society represented, which had its cheerful and hopeful aspects as well.

Margaret
Deland.

Margaret Deland, without the use of dialect, has written fine studies of life and character in Pennsylvania; and in the village of "Old Chester" she has made a contribution to the geography of the imagination which is not unworthy to be compared with "Cranford."

Elizabeth
Stuart Phelps
Ward.

The work of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward is strongly imbued with the deep and intense religious feeling to be expected of one whose childhood was spent on Andover Hill. Sarah Orne Jewett gives us studies of rural life, not so prevailingly cloudy as those of Miss Wilkins, although dealing more with the seacoast communities.

Joel
Chandler
Harris.

Very interesting and important work is that of Joel Chandler Harris, who has preserved the folk-lore of the negro race, in perfect negro dialect. James Lane Allen has written of life in the beautiful "Blue Grass" country of Kentucky, in a style of rare purity, with a delightful blending of realistic and romantic elements.

James Lane
Allen.

Alice French, under the pen name of "Octave Thanet," writes strong studies of life in the smaller towns and cities of the Middle West; and Hamlin Garland takes us out to the farms of Iowa,

Alice
French.

Dakota, and Wisconsin, showing us, for the most part, the darker side of that phase of life. Richard Harding Davis has painted the two extremes of New York City life; and in "Van Bibber" has added a living

Hamlin
Garland.

Richard
Harding
Davis.

form to the number of real characters in fiction.

Mary Hartwell Catherwood has taken the field which Parkman cultivated in his histories, and has written some powerful romances of the French settlement of Canada; and a Canadian writer, Gilbert Parker, is using similar material. So Arthur Sherburne Hardy has written, in "Passe Rose," a pretty romance of the days of Charlemagne; and latterly Silas Weir Mitchell has gone to the days of 1776 for the subject of a historical romance.

Romance.
Mary
Hartwell
Catherwood.

Gilbert
Parker.
Arthur Sher-
burneHardy.

Silas Weir
Mitchell.

We have two humorous writers whose work seems to stand outside of any possible classification; which is perhaps so much the worse for the classification. Samuel Langhorne Clemens has kept the world laughing for a generation. His pen name of "Mark Twain" is certainly one of the best-known names of the time. The world is his province, from California to the tomb of Adam; and his regard for the unities of time is shown in the title of one of his books, "A Yankee at King Arthur's Court." Francis Richard Stockton delights in telling the most extravagantly impossible tales with a realistic effect which is to many irresistibly humorous. In "The Lady or the Tiger" he has set the world to guessing an apparently insoluble conundrum. The charm of his work is as difficult to characterize and as undeniably irresistible as that of "Mark Twain."

"Mark
Twain."

Francis
Richard
Stockton.

A very large proportion of the books published every year are classified as Juvenile Literature. Attention has been given to this in the previous periods, and it must not be entirely neglected here. Probably

Juvenile
Literature.

Frances
Hodgson
Burnett.

the book that has had the greatest vogue since "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is "Little Lord Fauntleroy," by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Mrs. Burnett is an Englishwoman, American by adoption and marriage. Her earliest books were novels of English life. She then wrote several whose scenes and characters were American; and "A Fair Barbarian," as well as "Fauntleroy" might be called international. She has written other juvenile stories; but the one named remains the most widely read book of its type.

The Drama.

In dramatic composition there has been more activity during the present period than the last. At least three plays by American authors have had wide popularity. Joseph Jefferson's dramatization of "Rip Van Winkle" must be regarded as an entirely American production. So, too, with "The Gilded Age," written in collaboration by Charles Dudley Warner and "Mark Twain"; and "The Old Homestead," by Denman Thompson. W. D. Howells has written a series of farces; a combination of dramatic and narrative writing, where there is just enough of description and narration to take the place of scenery and costume, and so make the action clear to the reader. Mrs. Burnett has dramatized some of her stories, and Henry James put into dramatic form his story "Daisy Miller." Bronson Howard and Brander Matthews stand for an able endeavor to apply the principles of literary art to the conditions of the modern stage.

History.

The historical writing of the present time is characterized by fulness of research and careful accuracy of statement rather than by imaginative portrayal of

the past. It is a time of monographs, rather than of great historical compositions. There is a tendency to follow the lead of the English historian Green, and give us the story of the people rather than of kings and cabinets; to recognize that there is something worthy of record in the quiet times of peace, as well as in the stirring times of war. John Bach MacMaster, in his "History of the People of the United States," illustrates these tendencies; and John Fiske is giving us a series of careful studies of the beginnings of our national history. The tendency of former periods was strongly to seek subjects outside of our own bounds. Our present historians for the most part busy themselves with American topics. Justin Winsor's wide researches have prepared materials for many future historians; and Edward Eggleston is doing important work in the history of our earliest national life.

John Bach
MacMaster.

John Fiske.

Justin
Winsor.Edward
Eggleston.

- In the department of exposition, a noteworthy fact is the marked development of critical writing. Mr. Stedman's critical work belongs here, although his poetry was placed in the previous period. "The Victorian Poets," "The Poets of America," and "The Nature and Elements of Poetry," are the most notable contributions which our Literature has made to criticism. Among the younger writers of literary criticism, Hamilton Wright Mabie is distinguished for broad scholarship, and clear, discriminating, yet warmly appreciative judgment expressed in charming English. The establishment and support of "The Critic" in New York, of "The Dial" at

Exposition.
Criticism.Edmund
Clarence
Stedman.Hamilton
Wright
Mabie.

Nature.**John Burroughs.****Oratory.****Concluding Remarks.**

Chicago, and of "Poet Lore" at Boston are worthy of note as indicating a growing interest in this type of writing. There is a large group of students and observers of nature who record their observations in charming essays. The influence of Thoreau may undoubtedly be seen here. Of these the most representative is probably John Burroughs. His books are full of the atmosphere of the fields and woods, fragrant with the pine and birch, and musical with bird songs. "Wake Robin," "Winter Sunshine," "Fresh Fields," are the titles which well suggest the contents of some of his books.

In oratory of the literary type, the present time seems to be lacking. Perhaps the preachers and forensic pleaders and statesmen of the time are too near to be judged fairly. Some say that the days of oratory are gone. But perhaps if they could see with the eyes of their grandchildren they would not say so. Volumes of sermons are printed and many arguments are delivered in court and in Congress; and each presidential campaign lets loose a flood of eloquence. But it seems better to let the subject pass with these general remarks rather than attempt the selection of any one or two to represent the oratory of this period.

In general, it may be said of the present period of our Literature that it shows a remarkable average of excellence, but no examples of great power. It is a high prairie with no mountain peaks. Perhaps "mountain peaks" is a figure of too high sounding a character to be justly applied to any of the American

authors. But the fact seems to be that while there are a great many writers of correct and musical verse, of bright entertaining stories, and of charming essays, there is no one for whose productions men wait as they used to for a new poem from Longfellow or Whittier, or a new story from Hawthorne. Contemporary fame is proverbially untrustworthy; and it may be that posterity will rate some of our present writers far more highly than do their contemporaries. Contemporary writers should be judged fairly by the standards set by the best work of the past. An intelligent appreciation and enjoyment of what is best in literary art is the only worthy outcome of criticism; and if this book has contributed in any degree to this end, the object with which it was written has been attained.

QUESTIONS

What are some of the influences which have tended greatly to increase the number of authors in recent years? What are some of the characteristics of present-day verse? Briefly characterize the verse of Bret Harte. Compare and contrast the verse of Eugene Field and James Whitcomb Riley. What writer represents New England? What writer has shown especial facility in the French forms? What writer represents the Canadian group? What is the present tendency in prose narration? What are the chief works of William Dean Howells? Give a sketch of his career. What is his theory of fiction? What is the peculiar charm of the work of Henry James? What are some of his limitations? In what sort of story does he excel? In what points does F. M. Crawford differ from the two preceding writers? How does the prose work of Harte compare with his verse? What part of the country and what class of people does G. W. Cable describe in his novels? What is the peculiar interest in the works of Miss Murfree? How does Miss Wilkins portray

New England life? In what type of story have American writers shown especial talent? Briefly characterize some of the leading short-story writers. Has the romance any prominent representative among recent American writers? What two remarkable humorists have we? What very popular author of juvenile stories? What is the present condition of dramatic authorship? What is the character of recent historical writing? What work is being done in criticism? What are the general characteristics of recent Literature?

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